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PRINCIPLES OF INSURGENCY AND COUNTERINSURGENCY,
AND SUPPORT IN COUNTERINSURGENCY TO
A DEVELOPING NATION

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A thesis presented to the Faculty of the
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

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19. ABSTRACT (Continued)

Beneath a nuclear umbrella insurgency has proliferated amongst the developing nations of the world. Insurgency if unchecked poses a threat to the stability of the world. To maintain stability, developed nations might have to support developing nations to combat insurgency. This support should be based upon common principles of insurgency, counterinsurgency and counterinsurgency support to the host nation.

Using the principles of revolutionary warfare evolved by the British Staff College, Camberley, the author has examined the validity of those principles. He has found that the insurgent does not have complete control over the subjective principles such as cause, popular support, leadership, external support, and creation of an alternate society. However, the insurgent does have initiative in the objective principles of choice of terrain, engaging in protracted war, and gaining intelligence.

The author is of the view that principles of counterinsurgency should be mainly objective in nature but directed towards attaining the subjective principle of popular support. The author feels that, as insurgencies are of long duration, an early enunciation of the national aim to deal with the problem, planning and organization for a long term perspective, and harnessing the total potential of the country as a national approach is essential for quicker counterinsurgency success. He stresses that insurgents should be isolated in order to bring them back to democracy.

In providing counterinsurgency support to a host nation, the author feels that the aiding nation should first analyze the principles of insurgency and counterinsurgency in operation in the host nation. He has explained that enduring common interests, national will, and minimum visible support are necessary principles to be followed in host nation counterinsurgency support.

The author has arrived at the principles of insurgency, counterinsurgency and counterinsurgency support to a developing nation through a process of historical analysis. The author accepts that the principles are not exhaustive to cover all insurgencies, yet they serve as a basis for actions by the counterinsurgent.

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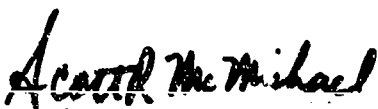
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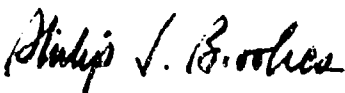
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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

PRINCIPLES OF INSURGENCY AND COUNTERINSURGENCY, AND SUPPORT
IN COUNTERINSURGENCY TO A DEVELOPING NATION: by
Colonel Tejindar Singh Sher Gill, Indian Army, 136 pages.

Beneath a nuclear umbrella insurgency has proliferated amongst the developing nations of the world. Insurgency if unchecked poses a threat to the stability of the world. To maintain stability, developed nations might have to support developing nations to combat insurgency. This support should be based upon common principles of insurgency, counterinsurgency and counterinsurgency support to the host nation.

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I dedicate this thesis to the Indian Army.



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CHAPTER : 1

INTRODUCTION

SECTION 1 : BACKGROUND

In the shadow of nuclear deterrence, future conflict lies primarily in the spectrum of conventional war and low intensity conflict. Insurgency and counterinsurgency are a part of low intensity conflict and have also been waged complementary to conventional war. Dr Richard Clutterbuck has said " Guerrilla warfare and terrorism, rural or urban, internal or international, has undoubtedly now become the primary form of conflict for our time."¹ Guerrilla warfare and insurgency are synonymous. Terrorism is a weapon of insurgency, although it does exist independently of insurgency also.

Using figures quoted by David Wood in Conflict in the Twentieth Century, Brian Jenkins has noted that there have been at least seventy-eight insurgencies between the period 1945 to 1984.² He says " The three components of armed conflict-conventional war, guerrilla warfare and terrorism will coexist in the future. Governments and subnational entities will employ them individually,

interchangeably, sequentially or simultaneously, and will be required to combat them."³ Dr Sam U. Sarkesian has stated in the preface to Revolutionary Guerrilla Warfare "Revolution is here to stay indefinitely and revolutionary guerrilla warfare is particularly useful strategy for the weak, the frustrated, the alienated, the seekers of power against existing regimes."⁴ As governments and the military are likely to be involved increasingly in dealing with insurgencies, the study of insurgency and counterinsurgency in the modern world is essential.

The potential for insurgency in the world has been multiplying with the emergence of developing nations. It had been hoped that the end of colonialism and the advent of detente between major powers would bring an end to insurgency. Historically, such has not been the case.⁵ Internal instability associated with modernization has created insurgencies and the potential for insurgency. Developing nations have been especially prone to instability.

" Developing nations are those which are progressing beyond traditional societies and which are experiencing economic, social, military, political, technological and psychological change. This change is normally characterized as modernisation growth and national development...developing nations are discarding the traditions, values, institutions, and perceptions of a traditional society...this often results in

anxiety and frustration which may create tension and disorder."⁶

As two-thirds of the world's nations can be classified as 'developing', insurgencies are a fact of the present and the future.

There is another imbalance in this assessment- very few developing nations are to be found in the 'West'. These nations are concentrated in Asia, Africa and Latin America. "Between 1948 and 1967, almost all countries of Latin America, two-thirds of the countries of Asia, and one-half of those in Africa that had gained independence by 1962 recorded one or more successful or unsuccessful attempts to change their governments by unconstitutional means."⁷ Since 1945 to the present, the British armed forces have been involved in 62 separate operations, of which 15 have been counterinsurgency operations.⁸ The U.S. in the past two decades has provided support in insurgency prevention and counterinsurgency to a number of developing nations like the Republic of Korea, Phillipines, South Vietnam, Iran, Thailand, Grenada and El Salvador.

If the potential for insurgency is allowed to fester unchecked an unstable situation will be created in many parts of the world. This instability would affect the interests of developing and developed nations adversely. These interests could be one-sided, or they could be common

interests of short or long-term duration. In most cases, as is proven by history, developed nations have come to the aid of a developing nation beset by insurgency.

If a developed nation is to support a developing nation to combat insurgency, the programmes of the two nations in dealing with the insurgency must be compatible. This fusion of intent and action will be difficult if there is little or casual agreement on principles of dealing with insurgency. The developing, or host nation, is likely to request aid in an internal matter, when the situation is either out of control of its own resources, or, it is in the act of losing control. For a developed nation to support a successful counterinsurgency at this stage will be extremely difficult. However, if both nations had been monitoring the insurgency on the basis of common interests and common principles, resulting action would be rational, timely and with an expectation of success. One of the reasons for the British success in the Malaya counterinsurgency is that they dealt with it as one government: by the time the independent Federation of Malaya was proclaimed in August 1957, the insurgency had been effectively controlled.

In the future, if a continuity of understanding exists between developed and developing nations on the principles of insurgency and counterinsurgency, potential

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In the future, if a quality of understanding exists between developed and developing nations on the principles of insurgency and counterinsurgency, potential

insurgencies might be avoided, and counterinsurgency measures might be more effectively mounted. It is the purpose of this thesis to examine the principles for insurgency, counterinsurgency, and additional principles of counterinsurgency support to a developing nation. The examples and principles to be examined are by no means exhaustive and cannot cover all insurgencies. To arrive at the principles, no absolute data can be produced. However, through a comparison of principles adopted by nations in the free world, common and workable principles can be determined.

SECTION 2 : DEFINITION OF TERMS

This thesis defines only those terms which are essential to the thesis for clarity. Most of these terms concern the word 'isolation', a term not defined by authors writing on the subject of counterinsurgency. So far 'isolation' has been mainly associated with the physical cutting off the guerrilla from the population sustaining him,⁹ or, cutting off guerrillas from the source of their strength.¹⁰ The term has also been used in connection with the 'strategic hamlet programme' which was a relocation of villages and people accomplished successfully in Malaya and unsuccessfully in Vietnam. This programme included the control of movement of people and supplies.¹¹ The definition of 'isolation' used in this thesis includes the political and psychological aspects as well.

Insurgency. A movement by a section of the people directed towards the overthrow or degradation of constitutional authority through subversion, coercion, terrorism and armed force.

Isolation. Political, physical, psychological and

socio-economic control by the government, which forces the insurgent to respond to counterinsurgency measures and return to the path of democracy.

Political Isolation. The refutation of insurgent ideology and methods by a target population, the people of a country and a significant body of world opinion.

Physical Isolation. The restriction of the insurgent activity to a particular geographical zone, area, or locality.

Socio-Economic Isolation. The reduction of insurgent economic capability to such a level whereby it is difficult to achieve insurgent stated goals. This includes isolation from economic support of sympathetic groups or nations and an improvement of the socio-economic profile of the target area.

Psychological Isolation. Alienation of the people of a country and the target population from insurgent strategic, operational and tactical methods. It implies the achievement of moral ascendancy by legitimate authority.

Partial Isolation. Isolation of the insurgent in one or more, or a combination of factors of isolation. Partial isolation could be sufficient to lead to the

controlling of an insurgency. The factors or combination of factors leading to such a situation would vary with the environment in the target area and its people.

Constitutional Authority. Authority derived from the lawful application of the terms of a nation's basic rules of operation in the form of a written constitution or traditional, religious, cultural values and laws.

Security Forces. The organization and forces used by a country to combat insurgency. It includes powers and procedures provided to those forces by the government of the country acting within its legal constitutional authority. These forces include the government, its agencies, military, para-military, police and civilians who have been tasked to implement counterinsurgency measures.

Counterinsurgency Measures. Measures initiated by constitutional authority to combat insurgency. Measures include the use of government agencies, security forces, political initiatives, socio-economic efforts, diplomacy and psychological action.

Visibility. The degree of knowledge by security forces of the insurgent, his environment, strategy, operations, tactics and means of support. This is a basic requirement for successful security force operations.

throughout an insurgency.

Revolution. A mass movement whose object is the overthrowing of an existing system of government. A revolution could be peaceful or, starting from insurgency lead to civil war. A revolution is normally characterised by spontaneity and violence.

Civil War. Armed conflict between two or more population groups within a country who are seeking to seize political power through force. It assumes that the armed forces of the country would be split amongst the warring groups.

Legitimacy. The acceptance by the people of a government's right to govern. In a democracy, the government would have been elected in a free and fair election.

ENDNOTES : CHAPTER I

¹Richard Clutterbuck, Guerrillas and Terrorists, (Ohio University Press, 1980): 16.

²Brian Jenkins, " New Modes of Conflict ", ORBIS, Vol 28. No 1, (Spring 1984) : 16.

³Ibid., 3.

⁴Sam C. Sarkesian, ed., Revolutionary Guerrilla Warfare, (Precedent Publishing Inc., Chicago, 1975):x. (Hereafter, Sarkesian, Revolutionary Guerrilla Warfare,).

⁵Ibid.

⁶Headquarters Department of the Army, Low Intensity Conflict- FM 100-20, (Washington, DC, 16 January 1981): 19. (Hereafter, FM 100-20,).

⁷Thomas H. Greene, Comparative Revolutionary Movements, (Prentice-Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1974): 6. (Hereafter, Greene, Comparative Revolutionary Movements,).

⁸Staff College Camberley, Counter Revolutionary Warfare and Out of Area Handbook, (May, 1985): H1-H4. (Hereafter, Camberley, CRW and OAH,).

⁹Roger Trinquier, Modern Warfare : A French View of Counter Insurgency, (Pail Mall Press Ltd, London, 1964): 64. (Hereafter, Trinquier, Modern Warfare,).

¹⁰Robert Taber, The War of the Flea, (Lyle Stuart, New York, 1962): 159. (Hereafter, Taber, War of the Flea,).

¹¹Sir Robert Thompson, Defeating Communist Insurgency, Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam, (F.A.Praeger, New York, 1966): 141. (Hereafter, Thompson, Defeating Communist Insurgency,).

CHAPTER 11

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Countering insurgency has been one of the functions of established governments through the ages. In this century, however, insurgency has received a deserved attention in literature. The richness of this literature became apparent in the 1950s and it increased further with the impetus given by the the Vietnam war and modern terrorism. As successful insurgency leads to eventual political change, modern literature on insurgency reflects the historical political process in the world. Available literature can be divided into three main categories: literature on insurgency, counterinsurgency and, counterinsurgency support to a host nation.

The fall of colonial empires and the spread of communism have been the main subjects for literature on insurgency. Communism has fed upon the decay of the colonial systems in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Many authors have concentrated upon the study of insurgency and developed 'principles', 'frameworks' or 'requirements' for a

successful insurgency. Some authors have, in part, defined the principles of counterinsurgency or even laws of counterinsurgency. However, the collation and codification of the principles of counterinsurgency has mainly been the work of armed forces of nations, who are responsible for evolving doctrine for the application of military force in an insurgent environment. The issue of support of a developing nation has received considerable attention in the British and American armies.

I.E. Lawrence is perhaps the first modern author to describe the initiation and execution of an insurgency. He considered insurgency (though he called it 'war'), under three variables: 'algebraic', 'biological' and 'psychological'. The algebraic dealt with fixed conditions of time and space, terrain, communications, troops and mechanical inventions. The biological implied the physical application of these ideas. He called the psychological, the element of ideas. He said,

"..suppose we were (as we might be) an influence, an idea, a thing intangible, invulnerable without front or back, drifting about like a gas? ...our kingdoms lay in each man's minds¹...ours would be a war of detachment. We were to contain the enemy by the silent threat of a vast unknown desert... (our) attack directed not against him, but against his stuff²...we had to arrange (our) minds..the minds of the enemy..then those other minds of the nation supporting us".³

In a few lines Lawrence sketched a strategy of

insurgency, where a small band of insurgents could exhaust the resources of their opponents while drawing strength from the terrain, the people (the Arab 'nation') and psychological superiority.

Prior to the time Lawrence was executing his insurgent strategy, V I Lenin had already stated that the "Revolutionary situation" required five elements. The five elements were based upon class struggle culminating in rebellion by the oppressed classes, the organisation and direction of the rebellion being in the hands of the communist party serving as the vanguard of the proletariat.⁴

Lenin's theory was fundamentally changed by Mao Tsetung's concept of "people's war". While stressing the primacy of the leadership of the communist party, he ensured its security by having the party build its own army. He advocated peasant mobilisation because he realised that guerrillas need a mobilised and sustaining people behind them to achieve success.⁵ In his writings he gave to the insurgents of the world a methodology of "people's war" based on its organisation into strategic phases.⁶

Mao's concepts are mirrored in the writings of Vo Nguyen Giap, another successful guerrilla leader.⁷ Dr Douglas Fike has observed, however, that in the case of the

North Vietnamese struggle, the military and political wings shared almost equal primacy in power, the 'armed' struggle and 'political' struggle being two arms of a pincer directed against a common enemy. The 'armed' struggle was carried out by conventional war together with guerrilla warfare patterned on the concept of 'protracted war' as enunciated by Mao.⁸

With the overthrow of the weak Batista regime in Cuba by Fidel Castro, Latin America faced the emergence of a new insurgent concept- the 'foco' theory. Che Guevara advanced this theory, which states:

"Firstly, the people's forces can win a war against the army. Secondly, we need not always wait for all the revolutionary conditions to be present; the insurrection itself can create them. Thirdly, in the under-developed parts of America the battleground for the armed struggle should in the main be the countryside."⁹

Interpreting Che, J Moreno has said that in essence 'foco' implied that "necessary conditions to a revolutionary situation can be created through the emergence in rural areas of highly trained guerrilla fighters organised into a highly cohesive group called the 'foco' ". Che did recognise three pre-conditions that were required before the catalyst of the 'foco' could be applied. These were: lack of legitimacy of the government, inability of regular channels to redress tensions, and the perception that all

legal avenues to change the situation are closed.¹⁰

The creation of a 'foco' invariably led to the creation of an elite not unlike the Leninist primacy of the proletariat, for the leaders of the 'foco' were drawn from the middle classes. Regis Debray, echoing these concepts, suggested the constant creation of guerrilla fronts. The 'fronts' would be headed by the revolutionary vanguard, commanded by the revolutionary elite itself. Debray felt it was crucial that the political and military leadership be combined into one command under one leader.¹¹ In Bolivia this elitism perhaps created a barrier between Che's 'foco' and the peasants. It has been argued that his distance from the Bolivian peasant made institutional form more important than actual work.¹² Che understood the need for support of the Bolivian peasants but could never establish the necessary rapport with them.

Carlos Marighela transplanted the 'foco' concept to an urban setting in Sao Paulo and achieved initial success. He continued to believe, however, that the urban area was a 'tactical' field while the 'strategic' battle had to be won in the rural areas. He was unable to develop an enduring 'foco' in Sao Paulo and was killed within a year. He left to posterity the "Mini-manual of the Urban Guerrilla" which has guided urban guerrillas and terrorists to the present

The principles for a successful insurgency have been discussed by many authors. John J. McCuen developed his principles based upon the communist model of guerrilla doctrine propounded by Mao.¹⁴ Robert Laber, going beyond the communist model, set down the "pre-requisites of a successful insurgency".¹⁵ The British doctrine is comprehensive in its description of the principles of revolution.¹⁶ The U.S. Army has developed "major elements" for an insurgency.¹⁷ Bard E. O'Neill has evolved 'requirements' and a "Framework for Analysis" of an insurgency which are similar to the conclusions of the U.S. Army apart from the factor of 'environment' as presented by O'Neill.¹⁸

Lagging behind literature dealing with insurgency, counter-insurgent literature climbed slowly from pro-colonialism to anti-communist insurgency and then to an examination of insurgencies in general. Frank Kitson in his books, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peace-Keeping*¹⁹ and *Bunch of Five*,²⁰ demonstrates this evolution and brings out the importance of intelligence, the necessity of legality in counterinsurgency operations and the role of the soldier beyond mere military action. The pro-colonial Roger Trinquier in *Modern Warfare*, has

succinctly presented a blueprint for an effective counterinsurgency. He favours direct and total action against the insurgents with the aim of "destruction of the insurgent organisation".²¹

Not quite as many authors have codified the principles of counterinsurgency. The first five principles of British Counter Revolutionary warfare doctrine have been established by Sir Robert Thompson.²² The contributions of Dr Richard Clutterbuck and General Sir Frank Kitson have resulted in the acceptance of ten principles of counter revolutionary warfare by the British Army.²³ McCuen also evolved five principles for counter revolutionary warfare. These principles were a reversal of the principles of revolutionary warfare. He saw the task of the counterinsurgent as taking the insurgents back through the phases they were attempting to follow.²⁴ Unlike the British Army, the U.S. Army has not enunciated 'principles' of counterinsurgency per se. The U.S. Army believes that the principles of war continue to serve as a guide regardless of the intensity of the conflict.²⁵ Also in consonance with the tenets of 'airland battle doctrine', which are, initiative, depth, agility and synchronisation, the U.S. Army accepts these as 'principles' for low intensity conflict having a 'broader' meaning and 'different' application.²⁶ The U.S. Army has in addition laid down three interdependent

components as a part of internal defence and development (IDAD) strategy in support of a host nation. These are 'mobilisation', 'neutralisation' and balanced development'.²⁷

ENDNOTES : CHAPTER I I

- 1 E Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom, (Harmondsworth, Middlesex; New York: Penguin Book, 1962): 197-198. (Hereafter, Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom,).
- 2 Ibid., 200.
- 3 Ibid., 201.
- 4 David Charters, Dominick Graham and Maurice Tugwell, Trends in Low Intensity Conflict, (ORAE Extra Mural Paper No.16, Department of National Defence, Canada, August 1981): 13. (Hereafter, Charters, Graham and Tugwell, Trends in Low Intensity Conflict,).
- 5 Ibid., 14.
- 6 Mao Tsetung, On Protracted War, Selected Works, (Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1972): 187-247. (Hereafter, Mao Tsetung, Selected Writings,).
- 7 General Vo Nguyen Giap, People's War People's Army, (Frederick A. Praeger, inc, New York, 1962): 93-112.
- 8 Douglas Pike, "Vietnam : The Insurgency", Lecture, (CGSC Fort Leavenworth, 14 January 1986). (Hereafter, Pike, Lecture,).
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CHAPTER III

PRINCIPLES OF INSURGENCY

SECTION 1 : INTRODUCTION

In a military community the reference to 'principles' generally implies 'the principles of war'. These principles are seen as a guide to warfare and, depending upon environment and perceptions, vary in small degree from nation to nation. The 'principles' being discussed in this thesis might amount to a reiteration of some of the principles of war. However, the principles sought are "Any of those basic elements considered essential to success in war (insurgency and counterinsurgency)" and a "generalisation that provides a basis for reasoning".¹ It is stressed that principles evolved should lead to the successful conduct of an insurgency or counterinsurgency.

In the study of principles of insurgency, authors have not been able to arrive at a consensus on their codification. It is not that authors fail to agree, but that from situation to situation the variables within an insurgency are diverse and cannot be compared with

exactitude. The theories and definitions on the subject defy quantification as they have to be based upon tangible and intangible factors (like the human elements of leadership and morale). By their nature of action, principles can be objective or subjective in application.² Despite a fundamental weakness imposed by the difficulty of quantification, it is possible to arrive at useful conclusions based upon existing doctrines on insurgency. While evolving the principles of insurgency or counterinsurgency we should bear in mind that-

"..theory development in the study of revolution should not be expected to attain the levels of sophistication that characterise many other fields of study.."³

For ease of comparison the principles of revolution as stated in the British Staff College (Camberley) Counter Revolutionary Warfare and Out of Area Handbook have been selected as a guide, these are: Cause, Leadership, Popular Support, Protracted War, Choice of Terrain, Intelligence, Alternate Society, External Support and Fight on all Fronts⁴

SECTION 2 : CAUSE

Every insurgency has a cause or causes. In the communist model of insurgencies, class struggle forms the basis of the cause. Historically however, the strongest cause has proven to be nationalism. It can be argued that in developing nations where economic, ethnic and cultural divisions exist, the call of nationalism might be muted by internal strife. Lack of integration within a nation does dilute nationalism but if interference by an outside power is perceived, a response to nationalism may occur. Such has been the case in anti-colonial insurgencies like Algeria and Vietnam.

Developing nations are more prone to insurgency because of a diffusion of political power, lack of legitimate governing structure, politicization in modern context of historical and ethnic animosities and introduction of technology.⁵ All these factors give rise to imbalances which can be translated into a cause by insurgents. The U.S. Army recognises that cause is a part of political dissent and in a vulnerable population, development of a cause can be rapid. Robert Jaber has observed that apart from a cause, an "unstable political situation" is also a pre-requisite for a successful

insurgency.⁶ An unstable political situation would allow causes to develop. Consequently, it would serve as an accelerator to a cause.

Mao Tsetung had a dynamic approach to cause. He saw cause as class struggle developed through nationalism into a "people's war". In his application of theory, cause is never static and is embodied in "mobilising the masses". He said:

"What does political mobilisation mean? First it means telling the army and the people about the political aim of war....Secondly, steps and policies for its attainment...Thirdly, mobilisation "by word of mouth..leaflets..bulletins..books.. pamphlets..mass organisations..cadres..Fourthly, to mobilise once is not enough; political mobilisation for the war of resistance must be continuous."

Mao gave a new dimension to cause: it cannot be allowed to stagnate. He considered cause as a part of the political process of the struggle. Significantly, while formulating the principles of revolutionary warfare, John J. McCuen has chosen to include "mobilisation of the masses" and not 'cause'.⁸ However, mobilisation of the masses cannot be achieved without a cause being present, otherwise, it reverts to the 'foco' concept which has been proven to be unworkable. For an insurgency to endure and prosper mobilisation of the masses will regenerate a cause or, eventually, supplant the initial cause, but an initial cause would have been necessary to mobilise the population. Hence

cause and mobilisation of masses for that cause are one principle.

SECTION 3 : LEADERSHIP

In any form of conflict, leadership is essential to success. In insurgency, the qualities required of leaders are much more demanding than in other fields of conflict. At the start of an insurgency, the insurgent organisation, which possesses few resources has to contend with a vastly superior government machinery. Insurgents have to be prepared to sacrifice themselves long before the goals they are striving for are even visible. The insurgent leader has to guide, coax, coerce, terrorise and destroy while retaining the central thread of the aims of the movement. This calls for a great inner discipline, an understanding of human nature, compassion, a capacity for detached brutality and prodigious patience.

Charisma, or an inner magnetism, is an important quality for an insurgent leader. Charisma cannot in itself lead to success, but it is a powerful accelerator in support of the insurgency. In the early stages of the insurgency, leadership plays a vital role- this is before a strong insurgent organisation has been developed. An example is the charismatic leadership of Ho Chi Minh. At the time of

his death, a strong organisation had emerged and could continue to give impetus to the struggle without detriment to the cause. Longevity of the insurgent leader plays an important role in lending stability within insurgent leadership. It would be difficult to imagine the success of the Chinese revolution if Mao had died early and of the Vietnamese struggle without Ho Chi Minh and Vo Nguyen Giap. In India, Mr Z A Phizo merely by staying alive has served as a focus of Naga discontent for over thirty years, thus keeping the insurgency going. 7

The insurgent leader must be able to combine charisma with sagacity. A poor choice of subordinate leadership or strategy can be disastrous to the insurgent cause. Che' Guevara had all the attributes of a successful insurgent leader but we have seen that the implanting of the 'foco' in Bolivia was faulty strategy. Che' paid for this error with his life, and with his death the insurgency came to an end. In the border state of Punjab in India, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhinderanwala emerged as a charismatic leader of Sikh fundamentalism. His rise to power between 1980 and 1984 was accompanied by socio-economic protest, terrorism, and finally, his demand for a separate nation 'Khalistan' coincided with mobilisation for insurgency. As insurgent strategy, the 'Sant' wrongly chose armed confrontation with

the government security forces. In two days in the Golden Temple at Amritsar, more than two-thirds of the insurgent leadership was killed or captured. The 'Sant' was himself killed. Though terrorism still exists in the State, insurgency ceased to exist with the crippling of the insurgent leadership.¹⁰

In communist models of insurgencies, the role of leadership is restricted to the communist party. Commenting upon China's revolutionary war against Japan, Mao said:

"In all of its three stages, this revolutionary war has been, is and will be fought under the leadership of the Chinese proletariat and its party, the Chinese communist party."¹¹

By so saying, Mao made the role of individual and charismatic leadership subservient to the party. Although this lent legitimacy to the leadership of Mao, it is difficult to imagine the success of the Chinese revolution without his personal leadership. It is however evident, that leadership is a principle of a successful insurgency. The leader creates the organisation which gives the insurgency further stability.

SECTION 4 : POPULAR SUPPORT

Leading the Arab revolt, Lawrence did not lay great written emphasis on popular support. He relied upon the animosity between Arab and Turk, the power of the local Sheikhs (bolstered with British gold) and the empty desert for security. Mao on the other hand, struggling to lead the world's most populous nation, placed his reliance upon the people as the main medium of insurgency. Popular support became the first principle of "people's war". Reflecting upon the struggle against the Japanese he said:

"This so called theory that weapons decide everything, which constitutes a mechanical approach to the question of war" is "a subjective and one-sided view. Our view is opposed to this; we see not only weapons but also people. Weapons are an important factor in war, but not the decisive factor; it is the people, not things, that are decisive."¹²

Mao was also opposed to the view that the entire people of a country had to be won over before establishing political power. He believed that political power established even in a small area of control would serve to harness popular support and coordinate military actions more effectively. Mao's concept of popular support is really a synthesis of 'cause' and 'mobilisation of the masses'.

Fidel Castro and Che' Guevara reached the conclusion that popular support, though necessary, was not initially vital to the revolution. They felt that by creating a focus of discontent, all discontented people would join the focus - leading to widespread popular support. Given the decaying nature of the Batista regime, Castro and Che were proven correct. A careful analysis of the situation at that time shows that during the infancy of the revolution in Cuba, without the support of the people in the Sierra Maestra, Castro would have failed. He did not have the support of the sugarcane growing peasants in the plains. Nevertheless, the antipathy created by the Batista regime was such that Castro had twice the amount of support than that of the government.¹³

In the absence of popular support, a successful insurgency must have potential to create that support. This could be achieved through indoctrination, coercion and exploiting and publicizing the weaknesses of the established regime. At the inception of an insurgency, fence-sitters comprise a majority of the population. They are indifferent, passive and ambivalent in their attitude to the insurgents. To change this attitude, Robert L. Haber has stated that one of the pre-requisites of a successful insurgency is the "clear possibility or even probability of success" of the insurgency.¹⁴ Success is therefore an

accelerator of popular support and hence, it is important for the insurgent to avoid any defeat. Small victories, well publicized, build up public support.

The capability or ineptitude of the government has a direct bearing on popular support. An oppressive government is likely to cause public resentment. This backlash of public opinion often generates support for the insurgent. The effectiveness of the government to answer political challenge and violence is critical to the insurgency.¹⁵ The U.S. Army has listed "lack of government control" as one of the requirements of an insurgency.¹⁶ This factor is once again an accelerator of popular support in favour of the insurgent. The quality of government action will to a large extent dictate the success or failure, and the likely duration of the insurgent struggle. The insurgent has to, however, succeed even in the face of most effective countermeasures.

Popular support also implies the capability of the population to sustain an insurgency. It includes the material support to an insurgency- provision of safe houses, food, sanctuary, base areas and eventually a political and

economic zone. A modern example of such a development is the zone carved out by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) in northern Eritrea.

SECTION 5 : PROTRACTED WAR

Protracted war is the result of a basic inequality of means at the start of an insurgency. In the war against Japan, Mao appreciated the immense strength of Japan and was aware that a protracted war was inevitable, he said,

"We are still a weak country and manifestly inferior to the enemy in military, economic and political-organisational power. Here again one can find the basis for the inevitability of the war and impossibility of a quick victory for China."¹⁷

Mao also stressed that though protracted war was a reality, a protracted campaign was harmful. His strategy was founded upon quick successes in battles combined with a long war. Mao did not state the unsaid- that the aim of a protracted war is to gradually debilitate the effectiveness of the enemy while gathering one's own strength. He however stated the dictum of "preserving oneself and annihilating the enemy". This strategy is a part of protracted war and has a direct influence upon popular support and maintenance of morale.

Insurgents cannot afford losses at the initial stage of an insurgency, particularly in manpower. Lawrence said:

"An individual death, like a pebble dropped in

water, might make but a brief hole; yet rings of sorrow widen out therefrom. We could not afford casualties."18

At the stage of limited war it is possible for insurgents to accept casualties to achieve a greater aim. During the 'Tet' offensive of 1968 in Vietnam, the Viet Cong were defeated tactically, suffering a large number of casualties. However, they, won the psychological battle by proving to the people their determination and acceptance of the need for sacrifice.

A survey of the insurgencies of the world will show that successful insurgencies are of long duration. Therefore the insurgent strategies have to be based upon this fact. General Grivas used protracted war in the strategy of exhaustion and exasperation. Robert Faber explaining Grivas's strategy has said:

"..through terrorism and guerrilla warfare" counterinsurgency "becomes too great a political embarrassment to be sustained domestically or on the world stage, unprofitable, too expensive, or no longer prestigious."19

The North Vietnamese refined the concept of protracted war and accepted the necessity of a fifty year war. They discovered that apart from its application within a country, a protracted war tended to change the perceptions of the war as viewed by outside nations. This fact, if combined with rumour, information and dis-information, could serve to make outside nations sympathetic to the cause of

the insurgents. In the same vein within the country, traditional loyalties of the population for the government could be destroyed.²⁰

Starting as an 'inevitable' factor, the concept of protracted war has developed into a principle for a successful insurgency. The permanence of the struggle lends authenticity to the cause and in time, legitimacy. This leads the people to accept the right of the insurgents to try and change an existing government.

SECTION 6 " CHOICE OF TERRAIN

In choosing terrain for conventional warfare for a battle, it is evaluated according to its potential for the offence, defence or both. In a campaign or war, the terrain has to be further evaluated for its capacity to sustain forces. Insurgency can be likened to war as it consists of a number of small battles of short duration in an extended overall timeframe. Furthermore, insurgency concerns the entire population and hence a complete region or country.

The terrain base must provide security, sustenance, and room to expand. In the early stages of an insurgency, the insurgent is forced to accord priority to security. Also, at this time, resources are unlikely to be in abundance in the selected area, for if they were, the government would energetically seek to retain the area. The terrain has to be such that the mobility of the insurgent should equal, if not exceed, that of the government forces. In short, the terrain has to be the base of popular support and afford sanctuary.

The existence of suitable terrain contiguous to a

sympathetic nation is perhaps the best environment for the insurgent. The Viet Minh enjoyed this advantage in their struggle against the French in Vietnam. The sanctuaries provided by China helped the Viet Minh regain strength and establish base areas. Mao Tsetung had to initiate the 'long march' to gain time and find a sanctuary from where he could organise the struggle. Lawrence relied upon the security provided by the desert and improved his mobility by ensuring a light logistic system. He said:

"We had nothing material to lose, so our last line was to defend nothing. Our cards were speed and time, not hitting power. The invention of bully beef had profitted us more than the invention of gunpowder, but gave us strategical rather than tactical strength, since in Arabia range was more than force, space greater than the power of armies."²¹

For greater exposure to the media, recruitment and generation of funds, the insurgent might choose to fight in the urban environment. For these reasons Carlos Marighella chose to shift his movement to the urban setting in Sao Paulo. However, he was aware that while the urban area served as the tactical battleground, the strategic victory had to be won in the countryside.²² In India, the Naxalite (Marxist-Leninist) leader Charu Mazumdar, shifted the focus of a successful rural insurgency in Naxalbari district to Calcutta in 1970.²³ After initial success, the Naxalites were steadily eliminated by the security forces in Calcutta by mid-1971. The Naxalites paid the price of

shifting a strategic focus into a tactical area where security could not be ensured. The failures of Marighella and the Naxalites proves that, unless a large urban population support exists, the insurgents are extremely vulnerable to counterinsurgent measures in cities.

In choosing an urban setting, the case of the Meitei insurgents of the State of Manipur in India is perhaps unique. The Meiteis are high caste Hindus who have a predominant population in the Imphal plain. The hills surrounding the plain are inhabited by Naga hillmen. In the latter half of the 1970s, the Meiteis began to resent the special privileges given to the hill tribes under the Constitution of India. Using the cause of reverse discrimination, Maoist-Marxist groups started an insurgency. The Meiteis were forced to adopt the urban setting in and around the town of Imphal because they had no support in the countryside. Although terrorism still continues, it was possible for the security forces to isolate the insurgency by 1984.²⁴

With the increased cosmopolitisation of urban areas, it does not appear that a purely urban insurgency can have success. In selecting terrain for a successful insurgency, security is the first requirement. The other requirements are availability of support and superior mobility. Whereas

the urban areas might serve as tactical areas for media support, funds, recruitment and availability of targets, the strategic battle has to be won in the rural area. A proper balance of the two is critical for a successful insurgency. Combining all these factors, choice of terrain emerges as a principle for a successful insurgency.

SECTION 7 : INTELLIGENCE

The insurgent has the advantage of not having to obey the rules of war. Consequently, when persuasion fails he is able to employ the weapons of intimidation and terror to gain information and build up intelligence. Che has said:

"Nothing helps a fighting force more than correct information. It should be spontaneously given by the inhabitants of the area where the army will be and it should deal with what is going on in a specific place. Moreover it should be reliable."²⁵

The insurgent has to develop intelligence from the information provided by the people. He has to be seen as a friend. The problems that an insurgent faces are an initially small work force, lack of secure modern communication facilities and the vulnerability of his intelligence system to infiltration. To be able to get success against the security forces, he needs reliable contact information that allows him time to prepare, concentrate, attack and ex-filtrate.

SECTION 8 : ALTERNATE SOCIETY

The aim of an insurgency could be said to have been achieved with the overthrow of the government. The permanence of the new government will be determined by an improvement in the socio-economic life of the people. Unless they are promised a better way of life they are unlikely to support the insurgents. As the insurgents require total control over a population, they strive for the imposition of an alternate society responsive to the aims of the insurgency and also responsive to popular desires.

This alternate society is not produced at the termination of the insurgency, but is a progressive transformation of society promoted by the organisation of the insurgents in the area under their control. Most successful insurgencies have been patterned on a communist model which in itself implies the implanting of a communist society. It is a very powerful model, for often it combines ideology with nationalism as has been the case in China and Vietnam.

It is the insurgent organisation which formulates and executes action to create an alternate society. There

has always been an internal organisational struggle between the political and the military to control the future society. In the initial stages of an insurgency, the military wing tends to predominate by the strength of its physical power. Mao Tsetung stressed the primacy of the political, the communist party. This approach has been seen to have inner strength, because a tested system of society is grafted onto insurgent dominated populations in keeping with the political nature of insurgency. Further it does not rely upon individual leadership.

For an alternate society to succeed, it has to be backed by a strong organisation. Thomas H. Greene has stated that a 'strong' organisation is one which is capable of surviving tactical military defeat and loss of one or more of its top leaders.²⁶ He goes further to say that an organisation has to structure a "counter-government", exercise "dual sovereignty" or (Trotsky's term) "dual power".²⁷

In the case of Cuba, Fidel Castro fostered the primacy of the military. It is from the military organisation that later the political organisation emerged. It can be said that the military and political in Cuba were one, a foco. Historically, the success achieved by the foco model has not been repeated and, consequently, does not seem

to be the best method of establishing an alternate society. The North Vietnamese, while establishing a communist society, achieved a synthesis in the organisation of their 'Dau Tranh' (struggle). While the armed Dau Tranh was responsible only for military matters, the political Dau Tranh aimed at action amongst the enemy military and the people.²⁸ What must be noted here is that the two organisations were in consonance with the objectives of communism and nationalism.

Mao Tsetung has referred to the need for cohesion in establishing an alternate society as "unifying the effort". He believed that the strategic decision would always come from the party and "lack of harmony, unity and centralisation is harmful". To achieve this unity, he advocated a principle of command-

"Hence, as opposed both to absolute centralisation and to absolute decentralisation, the principle of command in guerrilla war should be centralised strategic command and decentralised command in campaigns and battles."²⁹

Mao was clear that to create an alternate society, unity of effort of the organisation was essential and the party was the only top leadership. O'Neill, too, has reached similar conclusions and sees cohesion as the requirement for organisational effort. However he feels that cohesion and organization are two separate requirements.³⁰

To mobilise the masses, acquire legitimacy and lend credibility and permanence to the insurgency, the establishment of an alternate society is essential. This can only be achieved through a strong organisation and unity of effort.

SECTION 9 : EXTERNAL SUPPORT

If one accepts the fact that in its initial stages an insurgency will be hampered by a lack of resources, external support assumes great importance. If the area of insurgency is contiguous to a sympathetic nation, all support- political, physical, socio-economic and psychological-can easily strengthen the insurgency. The success of revolutions in Vietnam and Bangladesh are examples of this. An interesting feature of the communist model insurgencies sponsored by USSR and China is that both countries aid the insurgents without a personal combat presence. The USSR's departure from this policy is the use of 'proxy' forces such as the Cubans in Angola and Ethiopia.

The intensity of the insurgency is also affected by the amount of external support available. In the eastern state of Nagaland in India, during the mid-sixties, insurgency had reached a peak. Naga insurgents, who had mixed demands ranging from 'greater autonomy' to 'secession', crossed the Patkai Bum(Range) and made their way to China through the Kachin State in Burma. This was possible because Burmese control was lacking on the border and that tract was virtually a fiefdom of the Kachin

Independence Army (KIA) and the Hemi Nagas (Nagas residing in Burma).

This movement of 'China Bound Gangs' numbering 100 to 400 men became a regular feature. These gangs would receive training in China and return to Nagaland with weapons and supplies. The round-trip being over 600 miles, the quantity of equipment ferried was limited. About 1978 there was a change of China's foreign policy in regard to India and China ceased to supply arms to the Nagas. Leading to a decrease in insurgent activity in Nagaland.³¹

External support hastily applied in support of insurgency has little chance of immediate success. It takes time to train insurgents and it takes even longer for insurgents to spread their influence in the countryside. Commenting upon the insurgent organisation "Mukti Bahini" in Bangladesh during 1969 to 1971, Major General Lachman Singh said:

"Mukti Bahini was not a guerilla force in the true sense. Its members lacked the skill, training and motivation of guerillas. These men were recruited and armed in large numbers to maintain a show of popular resistance to the Pakistanis, but because of lack of leadership and brutal punishment the Pakistanis inflicted on anybody suspected of sympathy for Mukti Bahini the local population was not actively cooperative initially even though sympathetic to the movement."³²

The objectives of the Mukti Bahini were to lie down

Pakistan Military forces on protective duties, to sap, to corrode the morale of Pakistani forces, and to provide cadres to the Eastern Field Force.³³ Greene aptly concludes the argument by saying-

"India gave sanctuary to the Bangladesh rebels after their decisive defeat by the West Pakistani army, and only subsequent invasion of the West and East Pakistan by the Indian Army enabled the Free Bengal Movement to secure its political objectives."³⁴

The failure of the Mukti Bahini showed that an insurgency requires time to mature. This lesson had been learnt by Pakistan when it launched OPERATION GIBRALTAR in Kashmir in the summer of 1965. The object of the operation was to infiltrate Kashmir with a large number of trained para military personnel, who were to commit acts of sabotage, cause confusion and instigate the locals to rise against the government. The counter action by the Indian Government was effective and swift. The locals had no cause to 'rise' and the operation was a complete failure.³⁵

External support is critical to an insurgency but to be effective it must grow with the insurgency and support a cause amongst the population. It is extremely difficult to stage manage an insurgency externally in a short time frame. It follows that external support must form part of the insurgency and not be the reason for it.

SECTION 10 : FIGHT ON ALL FRONTS

The principle of 'fight on all fronts' advocated in British doctrine is a composite of cohesion and protracted war. Insurgency is an amalgam of the political, physical, socio-economic and the psychological. All these factors or 'fronts' have to be engaged simultaneously and continuously. It implies Mao's 'unifying the effort' in a protracted war.

Insurgency in a large country could appear in different stages in different places; indeed, a country might experience multi-insurgency as in the case of India. In India left wing insurgencies in the states of Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram were concurrent but in different stages in the late 70s and early 80s. In Nagaland, the insurgency was close to termination in failure; Manipur insurgents had just progressed from terrorism to insurgency; in Mizoram, the insurgents, under the guise of government negotiations, were regrouping. The Indian government was fortunate that despite the left-wing nature of the insurgencies, the insurgents could not effect inter-group cohesion.

There is a relationship between the stages of an insurgency and the factors comprising the insurgency. The

factors have to be applied continuously irrespective of the stage of the insurgency. The stages of guerrilla warfare as propounded by Mao are well known. John S. Pustay has preferred to call them 'cellular development' in four phases- 'infiltration-subversion', 'small band operations', 'insurrection' and 'civil war'.³⁶ The U.S. Army has categorised 'mass strategy' as a progression of insurgency in three phases- latent and incipient, guerrilla warfare, and war of movement.³⁷ From the insurgent's point of view, these stages tend to merge into each other and overlap in any strategy employed.

There might be an asymmetry of phases in two parts of the country, but overall the factors or 'fronts' of an insurgency need to be continually engaged. However, 'fight on all fronts' is a common part of any insurgent strategy and does not drive the strategy. Consequently, it would form a part of the principles already discussed and cannot stand as a principle alone.

SECTION 11 : SUMMARY

On analysis, five of the principles of a successful insurgency are subjective and three objective. The subjective principles are cause, leadership, popular support, creating an alternate society, and external support. These principles are subjective because the insurgent does not have full control over them and has to interact with the people, fight the government and gain support of foreign power(s) to make them work. However, the insurgent can directly influence the objective principles of protracted war, choice of terrain and obtaining intelligence. The subjective principles are the cement used in creating an insurgency while the objective principles are building blocks. The ninth principle discussed, 'fight on all fronts', is a strategy of insurgency and cannot be called a principle.

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CHAPTER IV

PRINCIPLES OF COUNTERINSURGENCY

SECTION 1 : INTRODUCTION

Do the principles of insurgency apply equally to counterinsurgency? A mirror image of the subjective principles of insurgency - cause, leadership and popular support- exists even in the field of counterinsurgency. Protracted war is also common to both. However, there is a difference in the evaluation of the principles and their effect.

Keeping the common issues in mind, the principles of counterinsurgency should be objective and action-oriented as their application should correct an unwanted situation. Accordingly, the principles of counterinsurgency should be derived from the actions desired to be taken, the aim, the time factor, the total nature of the problem, leadership and organisation, support for government, and operations against the insurgents.

McCuen had suggested five principles of counter

revolutionary war. He said that a requirement exists to-

"..evolve a long-term counter revolutionary strategy. This long-term strategy should not only be designed to block rebel progress, but seize initiative and drive the revolutionary movement back through its successive stages until it has been neutralised."¹

McCuen evolved principles based upon a reversal of the communist revolutionary model. However, there is need to develop principles capable of application in all insurgent situations. It is also important to note that the principles cannot be purely military as the nature of insurgency is political. From the insurgent's point of view it is 'total war' and it must be combatted as such.

Dr Douglas Pike is of the opinion that, for the communist model as developed and applied by North Vietnam, "no known successful counter strategy" has been formulated.² However, it must be noted that, one of the main reasons for North Vietnamese success was their call to 'nationalism'. In the absence of 'nationalism', or if instead the South Vietnamese had identified themselves with 'nationalism', it is unlikely that the North Vietnamese struggle would have been a success. Insurgents have strengths and weaknesses. The counterinsurgent should contain the strengths while exploiting the weaknesses.

The success of a counterinsurgency campaign rests upon the derivation and effective application of the

principles involved. The ideal would be to remove all causes of a possible insurgency before they can be politicised. This solution perhaps has been the case in a number of unrecorded potential insurgencies which have been averted by leadership and cohesive governments. On the successful termination of the Malayan counterinsurgency campaign, and the imminent failure of the counterinsurgency in Vietnam, Sir Robert Thompson noted two obvious points prior to formulations of any principles of counterinsurgency.

Firstly "governments should attempt to defeat an insurgent movement during the subversive build up phase before it enters the guerrilla phase"... "if not possible"... "must be defeated as early as possible during the guerrilla phase"... secondly, the government must know the "enemy and what the enemy is attempting to do at all the stages."³

If, for whatever reasons an insurgency occurs in a country, the constitutional authority has to take action to combat it realising that the insurgents have the local initiative and that their aim is the overthrow of the government, the government has to give immediate political direction and impetus to its policy to combat the insurgents. The government has to specifically state its aim for fighting the insurgency, the resources and organisation it intends to create to do so, and the strategy of counterinsurgency to be followed.

SECTION 2 : AIM

For counterinsurgent strategy to succeed, it has to have an aim from which to develop policy. As the effect of insurgency is political, it is the political aim which must drive all strategy. Sir Robert Thompson has written that the nation must have a clear political aim-

"...to establish and maintain a free, independent and united country which is politically and economically stable and viable."⁴

A study of this aim will show that it cannot be applied in a colonial context. The very words 'free and independent' would be counter to the interests of a colonial power. The USSR cannot employ this aim honestly in support of the government of Afghanistan, because it raises the question of legitimacy. Greene commenting on ideology and legitimacy has written,

"The function of revolutionary ideology is also to legitimate the movement, to sanction its means and ends in terms of basic values accepted by its followers and, perhaps all mankind"⁵...."revolutionary ideology enhances its own legitimacy and threatens the legitimacy of the existing regime in so far as it can claim continuity with the fundamental values and goals of the society."⁶

If the insurgent's political aim is to overthrow

constitutional authority and legitimise their own form of political ideology, the government's aim has to be legitimate in the eyes of society. The government must embody in its aim the sovereignty of the nation, its integrity, and include the popular aspirations of the people. The legitimate operation of the spirit of the constitution and the laws of the land have to serve as the framework of the political aim.

Robert Taber makes an interesting point on the purpose of the counter-revolution:

the purpose "is negative and defensive. It is to restore order, to protect property, to preserve existing forms and interests by force of arms, where persuasion has already failed...but primarily the counterinsurgent's task must be to destroy the revolution by destroying its promise, that means by proving, militarily, that it cannot and will not succeed."⁷

Taber has thus taken a step beyond the political aim and defined the implication of military success upon the political aim. All successful action by the government will impact upon the political aim, just as all aims of actions will flow from the political aim. Here it is of significance to realise that the insurgents, though misguided, are a part of a nation's society and have to be brought back to the mainstream. Also, the aim should never be defensive. To put the government on the defensive is the purpose of the insurgent. Preservation of society and

security of the population are onerous and costly tasks but they are the duty of a nation during peace or war and require no re-statement.

In any democratic nation the insurgent will endeavour to cut across the system of society and political parties to cause confusion and gather support. The greatest danger to the insurgent is a united opposition to the insurgency by all political parties of a country. Owing to the local nature of politics within a nation, particularly if it is regionalised on the basis of ethnicity, culture, religion or language, political parties in opposition to the ruling government have a tendency to extract advantage out of government discomfort.

Therefore the political aim has to be a statement capable of withstanding parochial pressures of political parties, and acceptable to the people, the media, and world opinion at large. It must also reflect an honourable method by which the insurgents, if isolated, can return to the fold. A national political aim could be stated as to uphold the constitution and maintain the sovereignty and integrity of the nation, while isolating the insurgents and bringing them to the path of democracy.

Controversy invariably arises on the formulation of the military aim from the political aim. Difficulty in

framing a military aim might arise if the political aim has not been clearly defined. Also, if the military is the principal law enforcing body in the nation, as is common in dictatorships and autocracies, the clear delineation of the political from the military is seldom possible.

In a democracy the holding of fair elections is a test of a normal political environment. Should such an environment not exist despite all efforts by the government, the military might be called to act in support of the government to restore order. In the United Kingdom, as in most Commonwealth countries, where the military is called out as a last resort in aid of the police, "the aim of military intervention is to restore the situation to the point where the police can once again effectively enforce the law."⁸ This is based upon the premise that the running of the country is the function of the government, the military being a tool to rectify a situation beyond the capabilities of civilian law enforcing agencies. The U.S. Army has an aim similar in content—"to preserve, restore, or create an environment of order or stability."⁹

It is when this national military strategic aim is converted to the operational level that a conflict of opinion arises. Harry Summers has written - "the aim of the military is to defeat the enemy's armed forces on the

battlefield to break his will to resist".¹⁰ Summer's interpretation of the military aim is based upon an insurgency in Vietnam which after 1967 had already escalated to limited war; limited not by its intensity but by its geographical extent.

Roger Trinquier, while stating that the reason for existence of an army is the defence of national territory,¹¹ says that if 'modern warfare' is against "an armed clandestine organisation...victory will be obtained only through the complete destruction of that organisation".¹² Trinquier's suggested aim is military and also combines the political. He does not suggest operations against the guerrillas per se, but against the organisation that binds them together. Thompson has elevated this thought process to the fourth of his principles of counterinsurgency- "the government must give priority to defeating political subversion, not the guerrillas."¹³

The political aim having been defined, the military having been called in, it is evident that a pure military aim will not suffice. It has to be a combination of the military and political even at the operational level. Paget has written that it is very difficult to bring insurgents to battle, consequently, they should be defeated by making it "impossible for them to fight on; this can be done by

depriving them of those essentials on which they depend to survive".¹⁴

Following the strategic military aim of restoring order, the operational aim would be based on modern warfare - "an interlocking system of actions political, economic, psychological, military.."¹⁵. In effect, the operational military aim would be 'to isolate the insurgent'. The operational aim answers the 'how' of the strategic military aim of restoring order. In case the insurgency develops into a limited war, the operational aim will not change; however, the quantity of military force will increase and be governed by the principles of war within the scope of the aim of isolation.

SECTION 3 : LONG TERM PERSPECTIVE

We have seen that protracted war has developed into a principle for a successful insurgency for two main reasons: firstly, due to the initial weakness of insurgents and their gradual increase in strength an insurgency cannot be swift; secondly, the protracted nature of insurgency offers the insurgents the strategies of exhaustion and exasperation.

For the counterinsurgent only one fact needs to be understood- the counterinsurgency will be of long duration and, hence, all planning must be based upon this premise. This is not to say that the intention would be to accept prolongation of the insurgency. In planning, the long-term perspective has to be kept in mind; however, the need to end the insurgency in the shortest possible time is equally important.

Counterinsurgency measures have been used in Palestine since 1945. In Malaya these measures were used from 1948 to 1960. The Vietnamese counterinsurgency developing into limited war spanned the years 1946 to 1975. In India the Naxalite counterinsurgency lasted six years;

Assam five years; Meitei counterinsurgency in Manipur seven years; the Mizo counterinsurgency eighteen years; and the Naga counterinsurgency has been in operation for thirty years. In Northern Ireland modern counterinsurgency operations, which continue even now, commenced in 1968.¹⁶ The counterinsurgencies in Guatemala and Uruguay lasted twelve years each while in Algeria the counterinsurgency spanned eight years. These examples should be sufficient to illustrate the need for a long-term perspective.

While the need to end the insurgency quickly remains unchanged, a protracted war is not necessarily injurious to counterinsurgent aims. With proper organisation the counterinsurgent can isolate and wear down the insurgents applying the strategies of exhaustion and exasperation in reverse. The Naga insurgency in India is one such example.

Nagaland is a North Eastern state of India bordering Burma. It has an area of 6.4 thousand square miles with a population of 0.52 million.¹⁷ The population is predominantly tribal and divided into 13 principal tribes.¹⁸ The Nagas are essentially a hill people. They have their own languages, culture and tribal government. In British India, Nagaland was a part of the state of Assam and even then, on occasion, the Nagas clashed with authority to retain their way of life and what they considered as their

rights.

On the independence of India in 1947 Assam with the Naga population in the hills became an integral part of the Union of India. Mr Jawahar Lal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, propagated policies sympathetic to the Nagas and, indeed, the hill tribes enjoyed a special place in the Constitution of India which specified that their rights and customs would always be protected. However social discontent, nationalism and left-wing provocation led to a state of insurgency in the mid-fifties. Nagaland achieved full statehood in 1960 but a political confrontation between the state and the centre continued to encourage insurgency.

The Nagas had till then been a semi-nomadic population. But, through social, political and economic measures initiated by the central government, the Nagas started to develop socio-economic roots in their respective tribal areas. These programmes were backed by military measures as a part of the counterinsurgency campaign. The military aimed to restrict insurgent activity to the areas bordering Burma, thus allowing the civilian government latitude to carry out civic action programmes in the hinterland. Though the military measures in physically isolating the insurgents were most useful, the primary reason for the state to return to normality was the effort

to make the political system work.

The Government of India and the counterinsurgency forces have made several mistakes and suffered reverses, but at the same time, they have been committed to a long-term goal of upholding the constitution and developing Nagaland. Consequently, the idea of 'nationalism' amongst the Nagas has been worn down by steady development and time. A long-term perspective has in effect exhausted insurgent philosophy- the process has taken thirty years. 19

SECTION 4 : NATIONAL APPROACH

Due to the long duration of insurgency and the change of elected governments in democracies, most governments seldom outlive an insurgency. The change of governments within the democratic process could result in a fluctuation of counterinsurgency policy. This is detrimental to the successful outcome of the counterinsurgency. The approach to the problem, therefore, has to be broad and deep, acceptable to the people of the country, and driven by an enduring organisation that transcends governmental changes.

Insurgency threatens the society which exists in a country and is a national problem even if it affects only a small part of the country. Usually it also seeks to forceably create an alternate society without the free will of the people. This does not imply that all societies must remain inflexible to change: change is essential and inevitable but it must occur within the legally constituted system.

Terrorism, subversion and the use of armed force are not a part of democratic behaviour. As a total society is

sought to be changed through un-democratic methods. the national approach should be to perceive the threat as a fundamental challenge to the nation's security. The response to the threat, therefore, must include the entire nation, its people, resources, organisation and external influences.

Insurgency has often been referred to as 'small' or 'little' war. The emphasis is that the conflict is localised. This preconception tends to steer the thought process of governments away from total action, especially during the early stages of an insurgency when the insurgents are most vulnerable to countermeasures. For the insurgents it is 'total war' and so should it be for the government.

For example, let us consider the Indian experience. Up to 1982, the Indian government had been used to dealing with insurgencies in its north-eastern states on a region-by-region basis. This regional approach was itself based upon two assumptions: firstly, the insurgents were a small percentage of the population of the country; secondly, the instability in the north-eastern states did not immediately affect the security of India. No central government organisation existed to coordinate or execute a national counterinsurgency strategy. However insurgency in the western state of Punjab changed this approach.

Punjab lies in western India having a common border with Pakistan. The state has a population of 14 million evenly divided between Sikhs and Hindus. The Sikh population in the country as a whole is about 14 million, or two percent of the population of India. Despite their small population the Sikhs hold fifteen to twenty percent of the jobs in national government, government service and the defence services. Also, of all the states of India, Punjab contributes the most to the national economy.

Terrorism and insurgency continued in Punjab from 1979 till a popular government came to power in the State in 1985. For India, this insurgency was of strategic importance by nature of its effect upon the integration of the nation, the economy and the military implications of Punjab and Pakistan sharing a common border. Learning from this insurgency, the government took two important steps: firstly, the creation of a National Security Guard to be employed in situations of internal disturbance; secondly, the appointment of a Central Minister for internal security.²⁰ India had learned through experience that it is essential to employ a national approach as opposed to a regional approach to insurgency.

Unfortunately the use of the term 'total war' by the government suggests extreme and repressive measures. This

is a fallacy. The insurgents do not have to be attacked with "methods...far more effective than those which would have been considered and used in peacetime."²¹ If national mobilisation of both resources and people in the concept of 'total war' is effected at the outset, extreme measures might not be required later.

The national plan has to effectively reach the affected population and the nation. Consequently, the government machinery has to be capable of reaching the population. One of the factors of success of the Malaya counterinsurgency was that suitable government machinery existed at every level. To the existing civil service and police was added a special organisation. This organisation had a unity of command exercised by the Governor and a committee system integrating the civil service, police and military at the national, provincial, district, block and village level.²² In Vietnam however, one of the reasons attributed to the failure of the counterinsurgency in "South Vietnam lacked necessary administrative structure and judicial system and had little time in which to develop them."²³

Legality in implementing the plan is as important as the legitimacy of the government. The agency that gives legality to a government is the judiciary. It interprets

the law and through its actions gives credibility to the national plan. Legality is directly related to the perceptions of the people and perceptions change: some of the methods employed in Malaya against the communist terrorists can perhaps not be used in the full glare of the media today.²⁴ The government has to remain within the law because it is the upholder of the law. Necessarily the law needs to be dynamic to obviate the advantages the legal process affords the insurgent. Kitson says:

" Everything done by a government and its agents in combatting insurgency must be legal..It is..perfectly normal for government not only to introduce emergency regulations as an insurgency progresses, but also to counter advantages which the insurgents may derive from, for example, the intimidation of juries and witnesses, by altering the way in which law is administered."²⁵

There will be a backlash of opinion when special measures like emergency regulations or special acts are made however, the just and legitimate employment of those measures will soon become accepted. Internment without trial was perhaps a necessary measure in Northern Ireland but its implementation by the security forces created irreparable damage. The government was seen to act illegally and therefore it became little better than the terrorists. The lesson is that security forces have to be kept current with the terms of new laws and the legal method of their application.²⁶

Planning at national level has to be based upon the visibility of the insurgents. If the knowledge about the insurgents is inadequate, the government will hesitate to act on a national approach. Intelligence about the insurgents is essential and an important fundamental in this regard is the centralisation of the intelligence effort.²⁷ Centralisation provides unity of purpose, common direction, efficient collation, unbiased assessment and timely dissemination of intelligence. This centralisation should peak at the highest level of organisation charged with counterinsurgency. However, centralisation must also include diversification of sources and ability for cross-verification.

At the national level, intelligence is dependent upon special agencies and the police. Significantly, the first system to be adversely affected during an insurgency is the police. This occurs for two reasons: firstly, the police and administration are the initial targets of terrorism and subversion. Secondly, because most police forces are regionally recruited they are more prone to local intimidation and coercion. One answer to this problem is establishing the capability of being able to reinforce local police forces with outside personnel while ensuring that reliable local policemen maintain affinity with the

population.

In developing nations with large populations and limited identification procedures intelligence gathering is even more difficult. Mounting surveillance operations in Northern Ireland amongst a population of 1.4 million has been extremely costly even though identification systems and procedures exist. In Punjab, the security forces had to deal with 14 million people with the only formal identification system being driving licences owned by less than ten percent of the population. The problem is further complicated by the existence of 'closed societies' amongst the target population. Comparing Nagaland to another north-eastern state of India, Mizoram, Major General D K Palit has said:

"..whereas in Nagaland there are a number of tribes, such as the Angamis, the Konyaks, Aos, Semas and many others, Mizoram has only one major tribe. Thus, the anti-government elements of the MNF (Mizo National Front) are based on a 'closed society' which the intelligence sections of the security forces find difficult to penetrate."28

Intelligence, though required to be highly centralised, has to have roots that can penetrate to the lowest local level. This can be achieved by having a system of intelligence that is part of the levels of government and the counterinsurgency organisation.

In summary, national approach is a principle directing a national plan which includes resources, organisation, coordination, legality and an intelligence system. The aim is 'total war' to combat 'total war'. It is only when the superior resources of a government are effectively employed against the insurgents that success can be hoped for.

SECTION 5 : POPULAR SUPPORT

When an insurgency starts in a nation it is obvious that dissidence in one part of the country has appeal. It is also evident that the rest of the country and its leaders have at that point in time begun to lose popular support in the insurgent affected area. David Galula has perceived four laws of counterinsurgency of which three deal entirely with popular support. The three laws are-

First law: "The support of the population is as necessary for the counterinsurgent as for the insurgent."²⁹ Second law: "Support is gained through active minority."³⁰ Third law: "Support from the population is conditional."³¹

In essence, Galula feels that a counterinsurgent must win the support of the population by gaining the support of those who can accelerate popular support and that support is dependent upon the organization and success of the national approach. There is an interesting observation by Trinquier-

"We know that it is not at all necessary to have the sympathy of the majority of the people in order to rule them. The right organization can turn the trick."³²

The fact that the French achieved complete military success in the battle for Algiers lends support to

Trinquier's proposition.³³ However, for democratic rule sympathy of the masses is required. Relying upon minority support, as in the case of Algeria, can be a short-term expedient but is likely to result in long-term failure.

Popular support can be attracted by charismatic leader, although even they are not immune to the problem of insurgency. Jawahar Lal Nehru and Mrs Indira Gandhi have been charismatic leaders of India, yet in their years of office insurgencies developed and continued in the states of Nagaland, Mizoram, West Bengal, Manipur, Tripura, Assam and Punjab.

The present Prime Minister of India, Mr Rajiv Gandhi is another charismatic leader. In his short term of office he has controlled two of the most dangerous insurgencies in India- Assam and Punjab. This has been achieved through good leadership and adopting a national approach. Commenting on Rajiv Gandhi and Punjab, Mark Tully and Satish Jacob have said-

"Rajiv adopted modern crisis management techniques to reach the Punjab settlement. He set up a tight knit command group, kept his own mind clear by working from brief position papers and maintained secrecy by insisting that documents were only read by those who needed to know. The rumours from all four corners of India which used to waft around Mrs Gandhi's 'darbar' (court) were kept out. This new style certainly worked in the case of the 'Akali' (Sikh) settlement."³⁴

The sincerity of implementation of the national plan will reflect increased popular support. Dr John M Gates has observed that during the Phillipine Campaign(1899-1902), the advent of the American officers and their insistence on civic reform, health, hygiene, education and providing a corruption free bureaucracy, did more to secure popular support than military action.³⁵

Popular support though essential in the country, is critical in the insurgency area. Popular support is required to support the national approach in furtherance of the political aim. The leadership has to rise above parochialism of internal politics, to bring the insurgents into the fold of democracy irrespective of the outcome of local political power struggles.

Popular support for democratic ideals versus that for parochial power can be made in the handling of the Assam situation by Mrs Gandhi and later Mr Rajiv Gandhi. The insurgency having been partially isolated, Mrs Gandhi wanted to legitimise a government headed by her party. The people were against the proposed election as they doubted its fairness. Thus only thirty five percent of the population turned out to vote. As Mark Tully and Satish Jacob have said:

" Unrest over illegal immigration in the north-eastern state of Assam had been allowed to drift to disaster, with three thousand people being massacred in an election Mrs Gandhi forced upon the Assamese people."³⁶

Needless to say the government was not legitimised and the insurgency continued. Mr Rajiv Gandhi after coming to power decided to ensure fair elections in Assam. The state went to the polls in January 1986 and returned a local party, the AGP, to power. The insurgency died with the results of the election. Mr Gandhi's approach drew popular support within the overall national political aim of democracy and an end to insurgency.

Another example of a lack of perception in winning popular support is the case of Nicaragua in the early thirties. President Hoover of the U.S. failed to support the popular nationalist Augusto Ce'sar Sandino calling him a "cold blooded bandit outside the civilized pale". U.S. support went to Sacasa aided by Anastasio Somoza and the latter, having assassinated Sandino, established a brutal political dynasty which was overthrown by the people in 1979. David Howard Bain has written:

"It is one of history's ironies that finds Nicaragua today with rebels again in the Segovian highlands, and a shaky regime trying to survive in Managua. But many of the guerrillas are former 'Somozista' National Guardsmen, and the government, which enshrined Sandino's memory by appropriating his name, is Marxist, a philosophy the nationalist leader never believed in."³⁷

Popular support is a reaction of the people to legitimate authority, leadership, credible political atmosphere and the sincerity of implementation of the national plan. The more successful the plan, the quicker popular support will develop. For the process gaining this support the U.S. Army has preferred to use the term 'mobilisation' - "The objective of mobilisation is to organise and mobilise the populace in support of the government."32

SECTION 6 : ISOLATION

Isolation is proactive in character and seeks to seize the initiative from the insurgents. Its aim is to bring the insurgents back into the nation and democracy. Sun Tzu has said:

"...to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill."³⁹

Force is necessary as a physical and psychological factor, but its application should be the minimum necessary. Isolation is achieved through coordinating the political, physical, socio-economic and psychological factors. However, it has seldom been possible to exert the influence of all these factors simultaneously.

Political isolation is the anchor of isolation because it draws its strength from the national political aim. There can be two main strategies of political isolation: firstly, to contain the political content of insurgent philosophy by discrediting it; secondly, to provide a philosophy and political credibility which are stronger and more legitimate than that of the insurgents. The first strategy is reactive, the insurgents will be able

to create new political causes the moment their initial causes lose effect. The second strategy is offensive but pre-supposes that the government is prepared to offer an improved political system. Batista in Cuba failed to comprehend this point; he had little to offer other than continuation of the existing government, poverty and corruption.

To make political isolation possible, the government must be flexible and provide for the changing needs and perception of groups within society. The emergence of an insurgency indicates that some political change is necessary and the example of the State of Assam is pertinent in this regard. The north-eastern states of India have experienced stability only when the central government has acted to satisfy regional political needs. By allowing regional political parties to operate with success, regional political aspirations have been assimilated into the democratic framework of the country.⁴⁰

'Neutralisation' is one of the three components of counterinsurgency strategy identified by the U.S. Army for IDAD. Neutralisation is the 'physical' and 'psychological' separation of the insurgents from the people and implies

"... all lawful activities to discredit, disrupt, disorganise and defeat an insurgent organisation"...and "its primary target is the

leadership and control element of the insurgent movement."41

Though it is essential to 'discredit', 'disrupt' and 'disorganise' the insurgents, these processes should be regarded as secondary benefits and not the object of the counterinsurgency. The resemblance between the U.S. Army and Trinquier's concept of the destruction of the insurgent organisation is obvious. The intent of both strategies, however, is political as they are directed against a political organisation and leadership.

Insurgencies based upon religion are as powerful as communist model insurgencies. This is because the organisation of the 'church' exists and is strengthened by emotive belief. When a government has to deal with such a movement even greater flexibility is required. Any countermeasures taken by the government can be interpreted as further religious repression. Commenting on the Islamic revolution in Iran, Ryszard Kapuscinski has said:

"It is authority that provokes revolution. Certainly, it does not do so consciously. Yet its style of life and way of ruling finally become a provocation. This occurs when a feeling of impunity takes root among the elite: we are allowed anything, we can do anything. This is a delusion, but rests on a certain rational foundation."42

Political isolation has to be complemented by socio-economic isolation. Socio-economic isolation is directed against the insurgent and the people in that area.

Direct socio-economic isolation is primarily short-term and is concerned with denial of resources to the insurgent. Indirect socio-economic isolation aims at raising the socio-economic level of the population above the level promised by the insurgents.

During the Naxalite insurgency in India (1966-1971), the principal cause advanced by the insurgents was land reform. The slogan was 'land to the tillers' and the tactic adopted by the insurgents was to encourage squatters on land belonging to farmers with large land holdings. In 1967, the insurgents decided to launch a 'land grab' movement. Prior to this however, the government had enacted laws controlling land holdings and distribution of land to the landless. Consequently, when this insurgent initiative was launched in the farm predominant state of Punjab, it failed because there was no land to 'grab'. This proved to be a grave setback to insurgent credibility and helped the government in isolating the insurgency.⁴³

As the population is the target and resource of the insurgent, there is a need to separate the population from the insurgents. Physical isolation implies a relentless limitation of insurgent mobility to the point that he is isolated from the population and resources. It involves restricting the insurgent and the target population.

Restricting the population by imposing controls triggers public resentment. Hence a balance has to be struck in population control to ensure a minimum possible adverse reaction by the population. It is here that knowledge about the insurgents becomes critical. The government must know who the insurgents are, who the insurgents can coerce and who supports them.

Physical isolation is best achieved by the local civilian government who know the population and are closer to the linkages of the insurgents. The military should be a support to the police if necessary. The military are one of the parts of physical isolation response and should be employed only when essential.

Physical isolation leads to a direct control of the population. 'Pacification', 'hamlet' programmes and 're-location' schemes are means of reshaping the demography of an insurgent area. Writing on the successful re-location plans executed in Malaya, Sir Robert Thompson says that the three objects to the strategy were-

"..of protection, of uniting and involving the people and of development, with the ultimate aim of isolating the guerilla units from the population."⁴⁴

It is clear that physical isolation must lead to a more secure and profitable environment for the population.

Thompson goes on to say that the government has to impose controls resolutely, it" must show that it is not only determined, but prepared to be ruthless."45"

During the first Indo-China insurgency, the French h tried to control the entire geographical area with inadequate resources. This proved to be a failure. Physical isolation was achieved by the British in Kenya when the Mau Mau gangs were confined to the Aberdare jungle. The British were equally effective in Malaya. On the other hand, Sir Robert Thompson has felt that the failure of the 'strategic hamlet programme' in Vietnam was due to a lack of strategic direction, military operations not being designed to support the advance of the programme and an inability to exercise effective population control.46

These controls have to be effective and have to be a part of the strategy of area control, the object is to secure the area from one firm base to the next employing all factors of isolation. The area to be initially controlled has to be such that it is within the capability of the counterinsurgents to effectively secure it.

Because of the political nature of insurgency, counterinsurgency is a battle to win hearts and minds of the target population. The size of the population and the stage at which insurgency becomes apparent determines the size of

the counterinsurgency population to be influenced. Due to the world wide nature of the media any target population must now include world opinion.

For long-term psychological isolation two themes are important. Firstly, the inevitability of government success and secondly, change for the better. During the infancy of an insurgency, the people are unlikely to believe in its inevitability, consequently, this is the best time to effect psychological isolation.

The people know that the government is powerful and has the capability to control their lives. This belief must be strengthened even in the face of insurgent successes. The government must be sincere and its successes should be humbly stated because the aim of the government is to assimilate the insurgents and not exterminate them. An incident during the Meitei insurgency in the state of Manipur, in India, highlights this.

In July 1981, Bisheshwar Singh, the charismatic leader of the PLA (People's Liberation Army), Meitei insurgents was captured and six members of his committee were killed in an encounter with security forces. This was a significant breakthrough for the security forces. The Army Commander, Lieutenant General A S Vaidya, flew with his

Military Secretary down to the scene of the incident. There he met with Major General V K 'Tubby' Nayyar, who was the commanding general responsible for counterinsurgency in the area. He asked him whether propaganda capital should be made of the incident. Major General 'Tubby' Nayyar replied that the incident should be played down. His reason was that where it mattered- amongst the target population- the enormity of the success of the security forces was already evident. He was also certain that this success did not spell the end of the insurgency and, later, the insurgents would mount counter-strikes which could succeed. If this were to happen, the government would lose credibility by having claimed that the insurgency had been controlled. The General's recommendations were accepted and this decision had the following important psychological effects-⁴⁷

The people came to realise that the security forces did not consider the capture and killing of fellow citizens a 'success'. By implication, the people realised that just as the security forces were a part of the nation, so were the people in the affected area. Further, Bisheshwar Singh did not benefit from media exposure and by allowing him to retain his dignity in captivity, he was made amenable to re-entering a democratic society. Three years later when the state went to the polls Bisheshwar Singh was elected as a member of the State legislature. Although terrorist

SECTION 7 : SUMMARY

This study of the principles of counterinsurgency suggests that there is one subjective principle and four objective principles of counterinsurgency. The subjective principle is 'popular support': it is a need, a requirement which is dependent upon the values and perceptions of the target population. It has to be won by leadership, security and encouragement of the population, and by creating a credible political atmosphere.

The first objective principle is 'aim'. The national aim is the fount of all other aims and actions. Without the evolution of a national aim, which is mainly a political aim, no effective policy or initiative can be generated.

The second objective principle is 'long-term perspective'. The government that initiates the counterinsurgency might not be the one that ends it, consequently, all planning and organisation has to be structured for longevity.

The third objective principle is 'national approach'. The entire resources of the country have to be

ENDNOTES CHAPTER IV

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CHAPTER V

COUNTERINSURGENCY SUPPORT TO A HOST NATION

SECTION 1 : INTRODUCTION

The principles of insurgency and counterinsurgency apply equally to the host and aiding nation. The aiding nations will have to study the principles in the context of the host nation. The host nation will have to ask itself does an insurgency exist? Can the state government and police assess and handle the situation? Will the state government be able to gauge the timing of aid required? Does the central government need to interfere? What will be the regional impact of central aid?

Within a country these problems are daunting enough, but a degree of flexibility exists; aid from the centre can be increased or decreased with few ill-effects. However, when a host nation requests aid in counterinsurgency from a foreign power in the eyes of its people it would appear to have made an irrevocable political alignment with that foreign power. This may adversely affect the concept of

nationalism for which the government stands. This weakness is likely to be used by the insurgents to raise the slogan of neo colonialism against the foreign power.

In some ways, the internal reaction to assistance by a foreign power resembles the resentment to central authority found from different parts of a federated country. In a democratic nation like India, where a wide diversity of ethnicity, cultures and religions exists, aid from the centre in a counterinsurgency situation is viewed with suspicion. Commenting on the resentment felt by the Nagas to central authority, Verrier Elwin observed that the feeling amongst the Nagas was that the

" Nagas are not Indians and do not want to become Indians...Naga territory is not and has never been. a part of Indian territory."¹

Counterinsurgency aid to a host nation by an aiding nation could be viewed in much the same way by people of the host country. This feeling, which can be exploited by the insurgents, is adverse to the interests of the counterinsurgent. It has to be overcome through confidence and understanding between the people of the two countries. Interests of the two nations have to be examined and burdens shared: aid needs to be provided without paternalism or the

creation of dependence which stifles self-reliance, and the national will of the two countries should unite to solve the insurgency problem. Common interests between nations, a supportive national will, and minimum visible support are essential principles in making counterinsurgency support to a host nation a success.

SECTION 2 : COMMON INTERESTS

National policies reflect national interests. Where interests coincide to mutual benefit friendships and associations between nations grow. Where interests clash, animosity, belligerence and, sometimes, conflict results. The interests of a nation can be long-term or short-term. Economic interests tend to impact on all other national interests be they ideological, cultural or those established by historical precedent. An aiding nation is unlikely to come to the assistance of a host nation unless some commonality of interests is present. Keeping in view that insurgencies are 'protracted wars', such interests must be enduring.

No country will willingly open itself to exploitation by outside interests. It will seek support if the assistance is beneficial to the country in the long-term perspective. The requirement of common interests between the host and aiding nations is hence critical to the success of counterinsurgency operations. If common interests exist the aiding nation would be able to assess the symptoms of insurgency quickly through cooperation in the field of shared intelligence.

If the insurgency is to be isolated, counterinsurgency measures must be implemented as early as possible. For the host nation, the best strategy is prevention rather than cure. This implies a removal of the possible causes of insurgency in that country. The causes could be political or socio-economic. Whereas the political causes should be tackled by the nation itself, an aiding nation could play an important role in aiding the socio-economic programme. If this aid is within the common interests of the two nations, an atmosphere of confidence is likely to develop between them and their people. If subsequent counterinsurgency aid is sought by the host nation, its people would see it as a logical extension of existing programmes. Consequently, it would be that much more difficult for the insurgents to gain propaganda capital by depicting the aid as a threat to nationalism.

The British in Malaya had common interests with the emerging independent Federation of Malaya. The interests were long-term, based upon the economic infrastructure built during colonial rule. The British were keen to ensure a smooth transition of power while retaining their economic interests. The Malaysians on the other hand wished to maintain their federal system without having to surrender it to communist terrorists. The coincidence of these interests

established the foundation which enabled the British and the Malaysians to conclude the Malaya counterinsurgency successfully. Ironically, the counterinsurgency was directed against the same organisation which had helped in attainment of the British short-term interest of ridding Malaya of the Japanese during World War II (Chin Peng, the leader of the 'communist terrorists' was granted the Order of the British Empire for his services during World War II).²

Colonel Harry Summers has observed that a lack of common interests between the United States and the Republic of Vietnam was one of the causes of failure in Vietnam. He stresses that, while U.S. interests called for a policy of containment of communist expansion by China and the U.S.S.R., the only Vietnamese interest was survival.³ The interests were incompatible over the long haul and eventually the U.S. found it necessary to cut the costs of sustaining a smaller interest in the face of more vital interests. Henry Brandon says:

" In early 1972, the situation was quite different. The United States by then had established a new relationship with China, and was in the process of doing so with the Soviet Union, which raised the common interests among the three into a different range... Three great powers, each for their own reasons, had reached the conclusion that it was better for everybody to bring this ill fated war to an end."⁴

Changing international interests will be reflected by changing specific policies. For counterinsurgency support, however, common interests must be durable enough to span possibly a quarter of a century. We have noticed that the insurgencies in Guatemala and Uruguay lasted twelve years; the insurgency in Northern Ireland is seventeen years old; Vietnamese insurgencies leading to limited wars spanned twenty eight years; and, the Naga insurgency in India has sputtered along for thirty years. Thus a long-term commitment is required and only common interests will allow for a perpetuation of the national will to win at any costs.

SECTION 3 : NATIONAL WILL

National will consists of leadership, the strength of the political system and the willingness of the people to sacrifice for a cause. Leadership in democratic countries emerges through the process of free and fair elections. The leaders reflect the mood of the country at that time. Depending upon the charisma and the organisational skill of the leader, the people accept the direction of the leader, or expect him to deliver on the promises of the election manifesto. Thus it is that the people choose the leader and the system he champions.

In comparison to totalitarian or authoritarian systems, democratic governments face a serious drawback. The leadership in democratic nations continues to change and in some national systems there is a sharp divergence of national policies following each change. In the lifetime of an insurgency, which could last twenty five years, the Presidency of the United States could change six times. In actual fact, five Presidents of the United States acted in the Vietnamese drama and there were eight changes of the South Vietnamese "government" in 1964 alone.

This change of leadership and policy is damaging to the counterinsurgent. The leadership of a host government and the 'intelligentsia' might accept the changes, but it takes a long time the people at the grass roots level to comprehend the change of policy - many see it as a weakness. An example is the change in attitudes towards Vietnam by the leadership of the United States during the years 1961 to 1972.

President J F Kennedy had, by 1961, decided to hold the line in South Vietnam in face of heightened communist guerrilla activity, to increase the Eisenhower commitment, and make the survival of the Saigon government a major objective of American foreign policy.⁵ Four years later, President L B Johnson, reiterating U.S. policy on the communist threat said:

" We have learnt at a terrible and brutal cost that retreat does not bring safety and weakness does not bring peace"...the Vietnam war" is guided by North Vietnam, and is spurred by communist China. Its goal is to conquer the South, to defeat American power, and extend Asiatic dominion of communism."⁶

Seven years later at a banquet on his last day in China, President R M Nixon, raised a toast to his Chinese hosts and said:

"But what we have said in the communique' is not nearly as important as what we will do in the years ahead to build a bridge across 16,000 miles and twenty-two years of hostility which have divided us in the past...we have been here a week. This was the week that changed the world."⁷

This fundamental change in stance towards communism certainly helped to bring the curtain down in South Vietnam. After all these years of anti-communist politics, suddenly, there were good communists and bad communists. For the people of South Vietnam who had been motivated to fight communism this split view was a puzzle they could not solve. Nor could their leaders create a fresh motivation against communism because the senior partner of the alliance, the U.S., had accepted the primacy of national interests over ideology. It sapped the will of the South Vietnamese people and strengthened that of the North Vietnamese. Commenting on the Paris Accord that followed in January 1973, Nguyen Cao ky said:

"...the North Vietnamese seized on one fact that the United States was not really concerned with peace at all; it was only concerned with getting out of Vietnam."⁸

The U.S. leadership and its people had been unable to maintain the aim they had set themselves in Vietnam. The national will could not meet the sacrifice of economic and human costs. This had a disastrous effect upon the alliance. President Nixon's toast in Peking signalled the fall of South Vietnam and counterinsurgency. General Bruce

Palmer Jr has written:

"The late Warren G. Nutter, former assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs under Laird, told me after a visit to Saigon in the early fall of 1974, that the South Vietnamese morale was shattered and that President Thieu felt betrayed and abandoned. In Nutter's words, the declared American policy of building a viable South Vietnam was only a sham; the real policy was to cut American losses and get out of Vietnam."⁹

Similarly in the Algerian counterinsurgency, it was the lack of national will represented by General De Gaulle which eventually led to the failure of the counterinsurgency. At the time when the battle of Algiers had been won by the counterinsurgents through employment of the physical and psychological,¹⁰ De Gaulle had assessed that the future costs of maintaining colonial Algeria would be high. He also appreciated that were the Algerians to be given full French citizenship, within a few score years the French portion of the population of the mainland of France would be in a minority. Accordingly

"In 1959, however, De Gaulle, realizing that such a long-term policy was too heavy a burden on the French economy, significantly softened his line, and on 16 September he pronounced the magic word 'autonomy'. The effect was immediately devastating; the troops felt cheated, the pro-French community of Algeria was outraged, the rebels recovered hope and aggressiveness. Within a few months, years of effort were ruined."¹¹

The national will of a country is expressed in the actions of the leadership of that country for it is they who

have to be judges of the strength or breaking point of that will. The national wills of the aiding and host nation must complement each other. If one of them falters, it will have an irreparable effect upon the successful outcome of the counterinsurgency. The peoples of both the nations have to accept the costs of a protracted and 'total' war. The leadership and the political systems of the countries must maintain and sustain this will.

SECTION 4 : MINIMUM VISIBLE SUPPORT

The cost of a long war has to be justified to the people by its government. When the cost starts to increase, the people of the aiding nation will invariably ask whose war is it? During the initial stage in escalation of United States support to South Vietnam, President J F Kennedy, commenting on the Buddhist protests against the Diem regime said:

" I don't think that unless a greater effort is made by the (Saigon) government to win popular support that the war can be won out there...In the final analysis, it is their war. They are the ones who have to win it or lose it. We can help them, we can give them equipment, we can send our men out there as advisers, but they have to win it- the people of Vietnam-against the communists."12

Today if the American people are asked whose war was the Vietnam war, the majority response will be that it was an 'American' war. So it was, but in reality it should have been a war of the Vietnamese people. South Vietnam was fighting to retain a government in a joint operation with the United States. On the other hand, the North Vietnamese were struggling for 'independence', 'liberation', 'nationalism' and communism as a people themselves, without the visible presence of U.S.S.R. and China. This lack of visible presence of a foreign power in North Vietnam made it

a 'people's war' and gave them a psychological advantage over the South.

In developing nations today, there is a sensitivity towards foreign support as it could lead to physical intervention. The insurgents will be quick to point out this seeming infringement of sovereignty and append the slogan of 'nationalism' to their propaganda. Consequently, the acceptance of support by a host nation from an aiding nation is politically difficult and yet, the aid is a necessity.

The aiding nation too has the problem of justifying the cost of war to its people. As this is often to be made public, the government faces opposition, and it allows the insurgents in the host nation to politicise dissension. The paradox is that though foreign aid has to be given, received and justified, it should preferably not be perceived by the insurgents. The requirement therefore is of minimum visible support.

The U.S.S.R. in Vietnam and China in India, have been successful in exercising minimum visible support to insurgents. In all the insurgencies supported by China in India, no Chinese presence has ever been reported. Insurgents have been trained in Lhasa and China, resources

have been provided, but the visible support has been minimal.¹³ The stress has been on self-reliance. However in overt counterinsurgency support the U.S.S.R. has suffered serious attrition and embarrassment at the hands of insurgents in Afghanistan and Ethiopia.

Minimum visible support does not imply minimum aid. If support in a counterinsurgency is to be given, it should be related to a 'national approach' and of mass relevant to the situation including the possibility of escalation.¹⁴ It is pertinent to recall Galula's fourth law of counterinsurgency "Intensity of effort and vastness of means are essential."¹⁵

There should not be a graduated increase of support because an insurgency is most vulnerable during its infancy. Consequently, the application of mass is most appropriate at this stage. An aiding nation will have to be prepared to offer support in mass at the outset and at the same time ensure a decreased perception of that aid while keeping in mind that the object of giving aid is to create self-reliance.

Minimum visible support continues to apply even on induction of military power into a host nation. The need

for military power pre-supposes that the insurgency is fast escalating to open warfare. Here, too, the military of the aiding nation must be in support of and be seen to be in support of the host nation's forces. The aiding nation has to ensure that within the host nation and in the world arena, it does not capture the attention of media or public opinion as being the proponent of counterinsurgency. We are well aware through the media of the contribution of the United States to the counterinsurgency in Vietnam. On the other hand, the absence of such information regarding the involvement of the U.S.S.R and China identified the North Vietnamese struggle with its people and not a foreign power. Commenting on the need for Vietnamese participation in the Vietnam war, Nguyen Cao Ky said:

"According to reports by American advisers, a number of Vietnamese units are ineffective and it will be difficult for them to replace American units. But I told the advisers that when there is a possibility of our doing the job they should let us do it, so we can win the respect of the people..." "on handing over the fighting to the Vietnamese, someone suggested calling the program 'De-Americanisation', No! for God's sake I protested. That would really prove to the world that you have been fighting the war."¹⁶

Minimum visible support is extremely difficult to practice because it raises questions of government secrecy, need for awareness by the public and denial of information to the media. However, if this is viewed in the

totality of common interests and national will, minimum visible support can be made practicable. It is important to realise that minimum visible support is essential to the success of a counterinsurgency in its psychological implication, and it encourages the host nation towards self-reliance and dignity.

SECTION 5 : SUMMARY

In supporting counterinsurgency in a host nation, the aiding nation has to first evaluate the situation based upon the principles of insurgency and counterinsurgency. Having done so, support will be effective if the three principles of 'common interests', 'national will' and 'minimum visible support' are either present or followed.

An inter-action exists between these principles and each is important to the furtherance of the other two. If the Vietnamese war had remained Vietnamese, backed by common interests and a fused national will amongst the peoples of Vietnam and the United States, perhaps the outcome of the counterinsurgency would have been different. These principles combined to give success to the counterinsurgency in Malaya.

The counterinsurgent's war is a 'total war' of long commitment. It is a test of wills. It is the most difficult war that an aiding nation has to fight because it has to eschew the limelight of success while sharing the bitterness of defeat. A very careful evaluation of the principles of counterinsurgency has to be made before a

leader commits his nation to an aiding role. It is a critical decision whereby the next generation might have to pay the bill.

ENDNOTES CHAPTER V

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- ⁸Nguyen Cao Ky, Twenty Years and Twenty Days, (Stein and Day, New York, 1976), : 192.
- ⁹General Bruce Palmer Jr, The Twenty Five Year War, (The University of Kentucky, Kentucky, 1984), : 141-142.
- ¹⁰Alistair Horne, A Savage War of Peace, : 546.
- ¹¹Sarkesian and Scully, US Policy and Low Intensity Conflict, : 142. Alistair Horne has used the expression "self-determination" and not "autonomy"; Alistair Horne, A Savage War of Peace, : 344.
- ¹²John Galloway, ed., The Kennedys and Vietnam, : 41.
- ¹³CIJWS, Background Insurgencies in North Eastern States, : 58.
- ¹⁴Harry G. Summers Jr, Colonel, "The Principles of War and Low Intensity Conflict", : 47.

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CHAPTER : VI

CONCLUSION

SECTION 1: CONCLUSION

Because of instability within developing nations, insurgencies are likely to occur in the future. An insurgency in a developing nation would affect the interests of the countries in that region and the world at large. To control an insurgency, developing nations might call for support from other sympathetic nations. An aiding nation would have to study the situation in the host nation before committing itself to support.

In carrying out the study the aiding nation would analyse the principles of insurgency being practiced by the insurgents. There are eight principles of insurgency arrived at in this thesis. Three of these are objective principles: protracted war, choice of terrain and gaining intelligence; and five are subjective principles: cause, leadership, popular support, creating an alternate society and external support. Whereas the insurgent has the initiative in applying the objective principles, the

subjective principles need mobilisation. Eventually, all principles must coexist to lead to a successful insurgency.

Having studied the strengths and weaknesses of the insurgents, the aiding nation would further examine the principles of counterinsurgency being followed in response to the problem by the host nation. This thesis has evolved five principles of counterinsurgency. The objective principles are: aim, long-term perspective, national approach and isolation. These objective principles must be applied with the sole purpose of achieving the subjective principle of popular support.

In providing counterinsurgency support to a host nation three principles have emerged-common interests, national will and minimum visible support. Once the decision to support a host nation is taken the five principles of counterinsurgency and the three principles of counterinsurgency support to a host nation must act in coordination. If this concerted effort is achieved, it is likely that the counterinsurgency will be successful.

SECTION 2 : RECOMMENDATIONS

A successful response to insurgency is only possible if it is based upon the principles of insurgency, counterinsurgency and counterinsurgency support to a host nation outlined previously. There are two parts to this response: firstly, the actions taken by the host nation; secondly, the actions taken by the host nation in conjunction with an aiding nation. Commonality of interests between the two nations will dictate the degree and speed of implementation of this complementary response.

The first step in an insurgency response requires the host nation to analyse the eight principles of insurgency. This analysis will define the problem and allow the application of the five principles of counterinsurgency. In particular the analysis of the principles of insurgency must isolate the weaknesses of the insurgents, which will be exploited in any subsequent response.

As far as the objective principles of insurgency are concerned (protracted war, choice of terrain and intelligence), survival is both a fundamental and weakness for the insurgent. Protracted war requires an insurgent to survive and prosper through winning small actions thereby

catching the public eye and gathering support through his demonstrations of success. Therefore, the counterinsurgent should limit the duration of the conflict and deny the insurgent publicity he gains from success. This can be achieved by application of mass through adopting a national approach during the early stages of the insurgency. A responsible media is an essential part of this approach; and requires that the government be truthful in admitting both success and failure. In this way the power of the media will be harnessed to government use in winning the trust of the people.

In choice of terrain, the insurgent's weakness is his mobility. An insurgent's mobility is influenced by the people and his ability to operate and survive in the environment. Mobility is enhanced by support of the population as it allows the insurgent to merge with the people of an area. If the insurgent is robust, inured to hardship and capable of operating with minimal logistic support, he will enjoy a mobility advantage when compared to the security forces. The counterinsurgent must restrict the mobility of the insurgent by firstly, separating him from the people and secondly, by ensuring that the mobility of the security forces is superior to that of the insurgent.

Separating the insurgent from the population has

many rewards for the counterinsurgent, one of the most important being denial of intelligence to the insurgent. An insurgent develops his plans from intelligence provided by the people who support him either through choice or coercion. A weakness of an insurgent is to convince people to carry out covert missions. Thus the counterinsurgent's objective must be to convince the people that aiding the insurgent entails prohibitive cost; while supporting the government, will result in security and progress. This is achieved by providing security to the population from insurgent terror. The people must know that they can and will be protected from coercion on a continuing basis. They also must know that the government is capable of identifying insurgent sympathisers and agents, thus highlighting the difference between a comfortable existence under governmental control and the hunted existence of insurgent sympathisers. While demonstrating the harsh edge of governmental resolution, the door to amnesty and clemency should always be kept open. For those who wish to take it, the first, difficult, step to join forces with the government should be made both easy and honourable.

In countering the subjective principles of insurgency (cause, leadership, alternate society and external support), there is a need to address the factors contributing to the cause, the survival of the insurgent

organisation, credibility of insurgent leadership, and the difficulties the insurgent faces in having to continuously motivate the population. The causes of discontent underpinning the insurgent appeals have to be identified and action taken to eliminate or ameliorate conditions contributing to the cause. Whilst this might not stop insurgency, it will reinforce the credibility and sincerity of the government by demonstrating the government's flexibility in accepting change in socio-economic and political matters. While implementing a programme for improvement, the government must continue its attack against the insurgent leadership and organisation.

To summarise the first response to insurgency, it is recommended that, capitalising on insurgent weakness, the counterinsurgent should: limit insurgent survival by early application of mass through a national approach; encourage a truthful and responsive media; ensure a superior mobility of security forces; give security to the population; make the cost of supporting the insurgents by sympathisers prohibitive, while keeping the door to clemency open; remove the causes themselves limiting the protest base; display a leadership capable of flexibility in ushering in necessary socio-economic-political reforms; and with all resources attack insurgent leadership and organisation. In case the

government does not possess sufficient resources to launch counterinsurgency measures, it might have to seek assistance from a friendly nation. In this case it is essential that, both nations agree on the broad principles of the programme of support.

Before providing counterinsurgency support to a host nation, the aiding nation must examine existing common interests and determine policy changes likely to impact on these in the foreseeable future. Additionally the leadership of the aiding nation must assess whether its people will support a long term commitment to the host nation. If common interests exist and public support is positive, it is likely that a commitment will be made.

The aiding nation has to get answers to certain important questions. Firstly, is the leadership in the host nation representative of the aspirations of the people? This would entail examination of the political system of the country, the degree of freedom people have in choosing their leaders, and the socio-economic expectations of the people and the efforts of the leadership to attain them. If the leadership is representative of the aspirations of the people, giving it aid will be productive.

Secondly, is the leadership amenable to initiating socio-economic and political reform? The leadership might

be elitist with a few people controlling the economy, consequently, the leadership would resist reform if it implied loss of control. Aiding such a government would probably result in failure. Therefore the aiding nation would have to demand reform as the price of support or, not support at all.

Thirdly, is the host nation capable of maintaining a democratic tradition and protecting human rights? An examination of the political history and political institutions of the country, could help to predict the likelihood of a continuing democratic tradition. Further, the status of freedom of the press, personal freedoms like speech and religion, right to work, right to have a fair trial, and protection against illegal arrest, would help in determining the position of human rights in the country. The perception of the minimum level of human rights might be different in the two countries. The aiding nation will have to accept the concept of human rights in the host nation or, negotiate for an improvement of norms.

Lastly, does the nation have resources to implement effective counterinsurgency measures? The host nation may have the resources but lack organisation. On the other hand, resources, organisation and training may be totally lacking. The aiding nation will have to make an assessment

of this resource potential and satisfy itself that it can make good the shortfalls. If answers to all the questions are satisfactory, both nations should be in a position to agree upon the manner of support.

The principle of minimum visible support must be paramount; and all assistance should complement the national strategy adopted by the host nation. A combined organisation or headquarters must be established to ensure coordination and integration of the aid; and this organisation must have representation at the necessary counterinsurgency operational levels of the host nation.

Economic aid should be dedicated to specific programmes giving the aiding nation satisfaction in completion and success of the programmes. For example, if it is part of the counterinsurgency plan to improve the irrigation system and communications network in a particular area, that specific responsibility could be given to the aiding nation. This would have two major advantages: firstly, funding and execution of the project by one agency would optimise effectiveness. Secondly, the host nation government would be unable to misuse funds earmarked for the project.

Military assistance must foster self reliance in the

host nation counterinsurgency forces. Priority should be given to training, provision of equipment and assistance in organisation. If the situation is such that the aiding nation's troops are to be employed in combat, command and control limitations must be specified. For example, whilst the aiding nation's troops must be prepared to fight as a part of the host nation's forces, units and formations should not be broken up and must operate homogenously. Similarly, if the aiding nation's forces are in sufficient strength to be able to operate independently, they should be allotted a specific area of operations. To give legality to the enterprise, the aiding nation's forces should be subject to the laws of the host nation, if not the legal system *per se*.

In summarising the second part of the response to insurgency it is recommended that, the aiding nation should critically analyse the strength of common interests, and the will of its people before making a commitment to the host nation. Further, it should be satisfied that the leadership in the host nation is representative of and supported by the people, will champion democracy, safeguard human rights and be capable of necessary reform. Also, all aid must support the national strategy of the host nation and foster economic and military self reliance with minimum visible support. It is anticipated that a combined organisation will be required

to ensure unity of command; finally, all forces of the aiding nation should be subject to the laws of the host country.

This thesis provides a theoretical framework of action for both host nation and aiding nation in a counterinsurgency situation. Assuming a commonality of interests between the two nations, two practical problems emerge. Firstly, the structure of the actual support mechanisms that the two nations must implement in order to best integrate the counterinsurgency effort. This can only be tested by a further study based on a specifically developed model. Secondly, the long term effect on the aiding nation's foreign policy caused by enduring commitment to support the host nation. An answer to this question will require another study comparing resource mobilisation capability of the aiding nation against: a time factor; the relationship between leadership, national will and maintenance of aim; and the impact of regional and global interests.

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