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URBAN INSURRECTION: THE TIME FRAME
FACTOR FOR MILITARY INTERVENTION IN A
COUNTERINSURGENT ENVIRONMENT

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Item 20 continued.

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The violent polarization of political forces between revolution and reaction has spawned an intense breeding ground for the urban insurrectionist. Obviously, the complexity of the modern city makes it vulnerable to the poor man's weapons of the Molotov cocktail as against the rich man's technology. Thus far, military incursion has proven to be the most effective method of combatting the dedicated urban insurgent from the short range point of view. However, the time frame factor for such intervention is the crux. Examination is made as to the effects of early or belated military intervention and how the populace and target government are affected. In conjunction therewith, we examine the criteria for passive and active military intervention. Indicators setting forth the expansion of the insurgency reflect that intervention is appropriate at the first indicia of any insurrection. The activeness or passiveness of military intervention is the discrete factor of the host government and contingent upon that particular stage of the insurgent activity. Recommendation is made for the organization of a single aggregate police and military intelligence center that would also function as a security operations division.

**URBAN INSURRECTION:
THE TIME FRAME FACTOR FOR MILITARY
INTERVENTION IN A COUNTERINSURGENT ENVIRONMENT**

The haunting specter of war in the cities was predicted in the not too distant past by Che Guevara when he observed:

There has been lack of appreciation of the value of guerrilla fighting in the suburbs; but it is, in fact, very important. Appropriate operations of this kind, extended over a wide area, can almost completely paralyze the commercial and industrial life of the area and cause disturbance and distress to the entire population. This makes the people anxious for violence to bring an end to their troubles. If thought is given at the beginning of the war to future possibilities, specialists can be organized for suburban fighting. Then action can be carried out much more rapidly and with a saving for the nation in lives and precious time.¹

This addition of the urban dimension to guerrilla warfare bodes a dangerous portent. Its implications, particularly in Latin America, are manifestly apparent where cities are plagued by masses of unemployed. When one considers the potential dangers in the marriage of the discontented rural peasants with the discontented newly urbanized and unemployed former peasants through a revolutionary ideology, it becomes overwhelming.

Urban insurrection and revolt cannot be strictly construed as guerrilla warfare; still, the terms are relative. The world is likely to see more of this activity in futuro simply because urban violence is a distinct manifestation and a natural symptom of political instability in areas where increasing industrialization has led to overly swift growth

in the size of the cities.

It is generally accepted that an urban area is a relatively permanent concentration of population with diverse habitation, social arrangements and support activities. It occupies a more or less discrete site and manifests a cultural cohesion that distinguishes it from other types of human settlement and association. Urban insurgency may be defined as that range of social conflict aimed at the overthrow or modification of an established political system by the threat of violence, demonstrated or implied, within the ecological and social setting of urban communities.

The predicate to perfect a time frame for introduction of the military in an urban insurgency situation pre-supposes a real or projected "war of national liberation." Subversion targeted at institutions of legitimate government requires a subversive organization which can orchestrate, conceal and control the various components involved. Variously referred to as the "shadow government," the "parallel hierarchies," and the "infrastructure," it is the subversive insurgent organization which makes such a planned movement possible.² McCuen succinctly states that "It is, therefore, clearly important that the governing authorities fully understand the strategy and principles of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary war."³

He states further that "They (the governing authorities) must carefully estimate the situation to determine which phase a revolutionary war has been reached -- organization, terrorism, guerrilla warfare or mobile warfare."⁴

At this point, the basic premise for military intervention must be determined. Barnett is eminently correct when he states that "The only successful strategy for suppressing a 'war of national liberation' so far discovered has been a military strategy."⁵ In Venezuela, the serious threat of an armed insurrection was headed off by a combination of a vigorous military response and a dogged respect for the legal norms and the democratic process. The Brazilian junta, by the end of 1971, broke the first wave of urban terrorism even though many of its causes are still unresolved. Guatemala's counterinsurgency operation, formally launched in February, 1967, virtually obliterated the insurgents by the end of 1970. The French in Algiers furnished a prime example of a government that can rely on the support of its armed forces to crush an urban uprising.

The causative factors of military intervention reflect that such involvement must, with reasonable certainty, answer the following queries:

- A. Does early intervention gain or lose sympathy for the government among the population?
- B. Does belated military intervention allow a deteriorating situation to get out of hand?

The time frame factor, when viewed in relation to the foregoing

queries, reflects that an intense gray area is ominously present. When is too early and when is too late? Should military intervention be active or passive? Therefore, we should be made aware of the predominant types of urban insurgent activity necessitating, possibly, military incursion.

The inception of urban insurrection does not normally fall within the initial phase of guerrilla warfare. However, the insurgent organization does go through five general stages which, in turn, produce accompanying types of activities as shown in the following chart.⁶

<u>ORGANIZATIONAL STAGE</u>	<u>INSURGENT ACTIVITY</u>
1. Establishment of leader nucleus	1. Formulation of basic doctrine & propaganda lines
2. Recruitment & training of cells	2. Propaganda dissemination
3. Establishment of outside or Red support (if not initially); expanded recruitment and training	3. Espionage and infiltration
4. Acquisition of weapons, supplies and equipment	4. Smuggling, robbery, hijacking, terror, sabotage
5. Expansion of popular support	5. Demonstrations, riots, strikes; guerrilla warfare (mainly in rural areas)

It appears to be generally accepted that espionage, persuasion, coercion and sabotage are particularly effective in urban areas because of the concentration of population, government offices, its personnel, industries, utilities and transport. Moreover, the intensified problems

of public order, health, housing and the obvious extremes of health and poverty contribute to social discontent.

In nearly all cases, espionage by some form of infiltration and penetration must take place before any degree of success can be achieved by either of these two forces operating together within a target area. In essence, the techniques of infiltration and penetration are designed to reduce the efficiency of the opposing forces; to neutralize and capture hostile organizations; and to control and utilize such organizations and their assets for subverting the government from within. The indigenous underground plays a vital role in these activities. Simultaneous with those actions at the grass and local roots level, infiltration and penetration are initiated by the underground in urban areas. In addition to the recruitment of key civic, government and military officials, extensive use is made of popular front organizations for infiltrating various political, social, cultural, educational, labor and other organizations in urban areas.

Initial phases of the insurgents' persuasion campaign permit them to draw on their espionage net for shortcomings of the incumbent government and weaknesses of the members of the established hierarchy. Key personnel, who are influential in governmental or military installations, are the prime targets initially. Extensive dossiers are meticulously developed on each target personality which, among other things, reflect his interests, motivations, personal vulnerabilities and

his susceptibility for being recruited in place. As may be appropriate, the insurgent propaganda apparatus then weaves the antigovernment, proinsurgent themes which are used to weaken whatever allegiance the populace may feel toward the regime in power. Opportunities for the dissemination of this propaganda now become plentiful and are less likely to be detected in urban environments. Obviously, this persuasive technique, precluding rebuttal by intimidated, blackmailed and coerced government and military officials, forestalls any hindrance to the insurgents obtaining a substantial nucleus of dedicated and popular support. During this phase of the insurgency, the propaganda features an increase in antigovernment rumors, reports of police brutality and corruption. Student and popular unrest are fomented in the form of proclamations against authorities, demonstrations and strikes.

Omnipresent with coercion is terrorism. Not infrequently, terror has become elaborately institutionalized, has developed its own bureaucratic apparatus and specialized professionalism, and has shaped its web over the entire spectrum of society. The large scale organizational rationale of the terror machine introduces a new dimension of cold-blooded efficiency and calculated violence for goading, guiding and controlling the population.⁷ Once the underground initiates acts of terrorism against a target regime, this is a good indication that insurgency has entered already into a more advanced stage of development. Selective terror is now applied to recalcitrant leaders and

segments of the population to assure support in their area of operations. The astute insurgent, however, is cautious. A terrorist bombing may be designed to do only a modicum of damage; but it serves to suggest to the whole city population that the insurgents can strike anywhere at will. Ergo, it discourages recruitment in target organizations and it probably quickens the flow of protection money into the insurgent treasury. It would appear that as long as an acceptable level of fear-not high enough to alienate the populace through anger and revulsion but low enough not to go unnoticed by the target audience-is maintained, current trends would appear to indicate such tactics will be intensified rather than lessened in the future; especially in the newly emerging nations and developing countries of the world.

Sabotage is probably one of the oldest forms of clandestine aggression. In essence, it is designed to break down or injure a state, government or military force in action. It includes any act which tends to interfere with, obstruct, damage or destroy an administration, transportation facilities, lines of communication, industrial plants, stores and material. Aside from its destructive nature, it presents a potent fringe benefit in that it becomes an intense psychological weapon with tremendous political impact on a target population and the government against whom it is directed.

In urban insurgency, during the early stages, sabotage operations are usually of a passive nature and non-violent in character. These

activities are, in the main, undertaken by the indigenous underground which has within its organizational framework a section primarily responsible for conducting sabotage operations within the target country. In instances where the insurgent has been able to exploit a particularly oppressive or unpopular government, widespread simple sabotage activities have been encouraged among the population. These may take the form of sit-down strike, slow-downs in key production industries, or such sabotage acts as overloading electrical circuits, improper lubrication of machinery and increase in equipment failures. Strike protests are organized that have the effect of crippling production and increase the rift or possible bitterness existing between the government and the local population. Oft times, this type of sabotage serves as an effective gauge for the insurgent to determine the degree of support that may be expected from the population and the effectiveness of their tactics in the early stages of insurgency.

The second category of sabotage is generally referred to as active sabotage. It is characterized by aggressive, positive acts directed at government lines of communication, transport facilities and vital military installations. It requires a regular strategy and tactics of its own composed of carefully worked out plans, reconnaissance and systematic application of destruction by highly trained saboteurs. In the synthesis of urban insurgency, it is during the operational phases, when the activities of the insurgent expand to a degree where they become

a dangerous threat to the security of the target country, that this type of sabotage is used. Selective sabotage is widely employed by the insurgent in conjunction with their rural guerrilla comrades during this period to neutralize the ability of the government's forces to wage war, and to produce terror and fear among the loyal civilians and military population; thus reducing their will to resist. This technique has been employed effectively in several Latin American countries-notably in Venezuela, where insurgent bands have sabotaged government pipe lines and oil installations causing millions of dollars of damage. As new sabotage techniques and devices are developed and put into the hands of the insurgents, it must be anticipated that the indigenous undergrounds will step up their sabotage activities in future insurgencies on a larger and more intensive scale.

The panacea of ills and the corresponding dearth of acceptable solutions to the populace signals the onset of rural and urban insurgency-either communist or otherwise inspired. Neither the police nor military segments are immune to the endemic vituperations of the dedicated insurgent. If governmental controls are imposed at the first intimations of an insurgency, alienating the citizenry may be the main result. On the other hand, if controls are initiated after an insurgent movement has become evident to all, they may be accepted by law-abiding people but be impossible to enforce insofar as the insurgents are concerned. This aspect of the situation vis-a-vis the United States should be resolved by

those who shape our national policy and can and will make command decisions to determine which insurgencies constitute a threat to United States interests and must be countered; and some we may wish to ignore or even support.

Assuming Country X has manifested signs of incipient insurgency which are inimical to the best interests of the United States and must be countered; the position is taken that intervention of military forces in the host country by host forces is appropriate at the earliest stages and should be supported. It is opined that the advantages achieved by such intervention, under controlled methods, far overshadows the unknown factor of loss of sympathy for the government among the population.

It must be borne in mind, however, that military intervention, too, may be categorized by two functions-active and passive. Passive intervention may be considered (insofar as it pertains to the military) as a feasible combination of a single aggregate police and military intelligence center incorporating a highly concentrated information exchange. Such an organization would function under its own chain of command so as offset undue influence and control by either group. Obviously, the advantages accruing to the host government in such a situation can form the bases for quelling further insurrection. For example, at this incipient stage, police inadequacy need not be supposed. Sub rosa assistance is provided through the military for

surveillance, infiltration and intelligence analysis. On the other hand, the military is in a position to use police information as a predicate for establishing further counterinsurgency activities. All things considered, the most important benefit is that the military becomes involved at the inception of the insurgency-at a time when it can help mold and create effective countermeasures should they ever be needed at a later time.

Reference is made to the explanatory chart on insurgent activities appearing on page 4. A cursory examination reveals the gross impropriety of military intervention in any stage except the beginning of the incipient insurgency. Assume the military enters the picture at organizational stage 3. Actually, this period could be construed as still being in the incipient area; but the effectiveness of the military is greatly reduced and hampered, if not rendered virtually nil, because this is the stage of declining police intelligence networks, failure of police raids, decrease in advance tips on subversive incidents and decreasing success of police agents infiltrating subversive organizations. Another disadvantageous feature is that the military incursions, at this point, must necessarily be overt.

Control of passive military intervention cannot be measured by standardized principles. Any system must be tailored to the country in question. For example, one country may have a special police force that is concerned solely with insurgency but may or may not cooperate with local police and armed forces. Another country's police force may

be one man's private army whose sole raison d'etre is to preserve that man in power. Also to be considered is the ever present specter of the cure being worse than the disease.

From a practical standpoint, however, it would appear that the single aggregate police and military intelligence center that would also function as a security operations division must be conceived and maintained under the command and operational control of the chief of state. A system of advisors, checks and balances could be instituted with the heads of the national police and military intelligence. As indicated previously, the separate security division would be a distinct entity outside the chain of command of the military and national police.

The idea of a combined police and military intelligence and a security operations division may be an anathema to a democratic state because the concept smacks of gestapo origin; but a government facing a rising insurgency and subsequent collapse must resort to such means to infuse the insurrectionist with fear of annihilation. If instituted at the onset of rebel activity, and with viable internal controls, some measure of success may be achieved.

Active intervention may be briefly defined as the overt commitment of a military armed force for suppression of such insurgency as may be deemed hostile or dangerous to the duly constituted government. Restricting ourselves to the time frame factor of when such a commitment should be effected, we reach the crucial question in an urban

insurgency. Obviously, the use of the military in any particular situation pre-supposes the inadequacy of the national police where it has functioned outside the orbit of combined police-military operations; or, a crisis has been precipitated that is beyond the legitimate capabilities of the police to handle. But what is inadequacy? And what is a crisis? Again, standardized formulae are difficult to set forth because what may be mere happenstance and general acceptance in one country may bode disaster in another. However, certain indicators, set forth in Appendix A attached hereto, have been invariably present in past and current insurrections. It will be noted therefrom, under the categories of coercion and sabotage, that the insurgent struggle is now directed at the cities. As these indicators are listed in the order of their probable occurrence as the insurgency expands, it would be in the discretion of the government concerned as to what point in time military incursion would be necessitated.

The portentous appearance of the military can be a matter of grave concern unless it is specifically delineated as to how long they will remain. Assuming, and otherwise loyal, that the local and national police are still capable of functioning; the position is taken that military intervention should be limited to the repression of the immediate insurgent activity. This restriction is palatable for several reasons. Firstly, limited incursion would preclude unfettered action unless, of course, there was a military coup d'etat. Secondly, the general

populace, if majority-wise is unopposed to the government, would be amenable to military intervention if for no other reason than to be rid of insurgent terrorism.

As long as there is popular support, government forces are, in the main, successful in suppressing the urban insurgent. However, there is a potent caveat. It must be observed that while the military is suppressing the violent insurrectionist, the guerrilla bands in the countryside enjoy an unrestricted operation; and ultimately, the "city militia" insurgents join their rural comrades to continue the struggle. Therefore, it can be affirmatively stated that a belated military intervention in urban areas can prevent a situation from deteriorating further; but without a countrywide elimination of the guerrilla and those indicators of their insurgency, the regime in power is doomed to topple.

Recent national and international events have proven the practical validity of some of the tenets set forth herein. On May 22, 1972 a demonstration, led by known rabble-rousers, proceeded to the Pentagon for the avowed purpose of disrupting the military establishment. Some 600 strong, they began to respond to the fire and brimstone provocateurs. On hand to cope with the demonstrators, was an unknown number of specially trained and equipped Federal Police. As soon as the demonstrators became riotous, these police quickly dispatched those assembled and appropriate arrests were made. However, in the Pentagon courtyard and at strategic entrances were located military

police from units stationed at nearby Ft. Meade. The purpose of their presence cannot be disputed; but the incident reflects that the non-demonstrating general populace raised not a single instance of a hue and cry against the potential use of military intervention.⁸

The current situation in Ireland is indicative of the military's value in several areas. Firstly, there is the effectiveness of a joint police-military intelligence and operations center. Secondly, it provides for additional manpower to assist the police in the suppression of violence. Thirdly, when insurgent activities over-extend police capabilities, the military immediately moves in to restore order and, afterwards, remands the locale back to the police. Also to be observed is that the populace, in general, has shown no aversion to military incursion.⁹

To form a comprehensive response to resolve the challenge of the urban insurgent and the entire insurrectionist movement, we must take heed to the lessons evinced by the French failures in Indo-China and Algeria. This strategy of response rests upon the principle that a population, organizationally committed to the support of the counterinsurgent effort on a total basis, will provide its own natural defenses against the machinations of an urban apparatus.


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Colonel, IN

APPENDIX A¹⁰

ESPIONAGE

1. Increase in size of Communist embassy or consulate staffs in country of concern.
2. Increase in staff and activities in Communist embassies or consulates in neighboring countries.
3. Increase in travel of suspected subversives to Communist countries.
4. Increase in numbers of scholarships offered by Communist countries.
5. Increase in visa requests for travel to Communist countries, particularly for students and youths.
6. Agent reports of locals being trained in Communist countries.
7. Increase in visitors from Communist countries (tourists, technicians, businessmen, officials).
8. Temporary absences from country of suspected or known subversives.
9. Increase in Communist youth gatherings.
10. Hosting of trade fairs or increased attendance by locals.
11. Return of nationals from travel or study in Communist countries.
12. Changes in residence of suspected subversives.
13. Disappearance of youths and suspected subversives and dissidents.
14. Increase in visits to urban centers by rural officials and leaders from areas of unrest.
15. Reports of increased attempts by Communist representatives or suspected subversives to make contacts with local leaders or government officials.

16. Reports of attempts to bribe or blackmail government and law-enforcement employees.

17. Reports of attempts to extract classified information from government officials or documents from government offices.

18. Leakage of classified information to newspapers.

19. Discovery of message drops.

20. Sudden changes in working and living patterns and financial status of government and law-enforcement employees.

21. Apartments and houses apparently being used for purposes other than residences.

22. Appearance of many new members in established organizations such as labor unions.

23. Attempts by new groups to obtain control of established organizations.

24. Infiltration of student organizations and unions by known agitators.

25. Appearance of new organizations and titles stressing patriotism, rectification of grievances, or interest of underprivileged or minority groups.

26. Reports of large donations to new or revamped organizations.

27. Agent reports of payments to locals for engaging in subversive activities.

28. Decline in effectiveness of police and counterintelligence networks: failure to report normally, provision of false information, decrease in advance tips on subversive incidents, failure of forewarning.

29. Decreasing success of government agents in infiltrating subversive organizations.

30. Assassination or disappearance of government agents.

PERSUASION

1. Worldwide dissemination of propaganda by Communist countries denouncing conditions in and the government of the country of concern.*
2. Radio propaganda from Communist countries beamed at the country of concern denouncing its government for failure to meet the needs and desires of its people.*
3. Propaganda from Communist countries aimed at the country of concern denouncing its allies for imperialistic and expansionistic designs on that country.*
4. In-country dissemination of antigovernment slogans and pronouncements by work of mouth, wall scribblings, and crude posters and leaflets.
5. Agent reports of increased activity on the part of suspected subversives (e. g. , movements and meetings).
6. Initiation of letter-writing campaign to newspapers and government officials deploring undesirable conditions and placing the blame on individuals in power.
7. Proliferation of slogans pinpointing specific grievances.
8. Increase in petitions demanding government redress of grievances.
9. Propaganda identifying local ethnic groups with those in neighboring countries and playing up irredentist themes.
10. Increased dissemination of well-printed subversive literature embodying Communist catchwords and doctrine.
11. Clandestine in-country radio broadcasts worded to appeal to those with special grievances or to underprivileged ethnic groups.
12. Increased thefts and purchases of radios and components, particularly transceivers.

* If subversion starts as an in-country non-Communist movement, items 1 to 3 will appear further down on this list.

13. Increase in antigovernment rumors.
14. Student unrest manifested by new organizations, proclamations, demonstrations, and strikes against authority.
15. Demonstrations by various groups demanding redress of grievances.
16. Use of bullhorns, truck-mounted loudspeakers, and other sophisticated equipment in "spontaneous" demonstrations.
17. Presence of photographers other than newsmen among demonstrators.
18. Publication of altered or misleading photographs purporting to show repressive police practices.
19. Accusations of police brutality or ineffectiveness or claims that government forces initiated violence when demonstrations end in riot.
20. Widespread advertising of planned demonstrations or strikes to appeal for sympathetic reception or participation.
21. Rallies to honor "martyred" insurgents.
22. Mass demonstrations honoring revolutionary heroes or dates significant to Communist movements in other countries.
23. Strikes or work stoppages called to protest government actions.
24. Nationwide strikes called to demonstrate the strength of the insurgent movement.
25. Sympathy strikes called outside the country concerned.
26. Propaganda sympathizing with strikers from outside the country concerned.

COERCION

1. Appearance of known terrorists or criminals in urban areas.
2. Increase in banditry on main lines of communication leading to urban centers.
3. Kidnapping or murder of government officials or prominent government supporters.

4. Increase in assaults on police and military personnel accompanied by theft of weapons.
5. Increase in thefts and purchases of arms, ammunition, and explosives.
6. Discovery of arms, ammunition, and explosives being clandestinely manufactured, transported, or cached.
7. Appearance of arms manufactured in Communist countries.
8. Agent reports of the formation of subversive paramilitary organizations.
9. Grenade throwing and bombing.
10. Reports of extortion attempts on local leaders and businessmen.
11. Assassination of key government personnel.
12. Agent reports of insurgent lists of targets for planned terroristic acts.
13. Anonymous threats addressed to or terroristic acts committed against government and business leaders.
14. Appearance of professional agitators in demonstrations that result in violence.
15. Evidence of the participation of paid and armed demonstrators in riots.
16. Deliberate acts during demonstrations or strikes to provoke police reprisals.
17. Demonstrations and violence in Communist countries against embassies, offices, and consulates of country of concern and its allies.

SABOTAGE

Economic

1. Increased smuggling of currency, gold, gems, narcotics, medical supplies, and arms into urban centers.
2. Reports that local currency is being bought up in world markets by Communist countries.

3. Appearance of abnormal amounts of counterfeit currency in country of concern.

4. Increase in bank robberies.

5. Increased thefts of drugs, chemical ingredients for explosives, narcotics, and staple foods from warehouses and distributors.

6. Work stoppages or slowdowns in essential industries.

7. Marked decline in product quality in essential industries.

8. Marked increase in equipment failures in essential industries.

9. Mass strikes and sympathy strikes in essential industries.

10. Appearance of known agitators or suspected subversives in picket lines.

11. Escalation of peaceful strikes to violence against property and non-striking personnel.

Physical

1. Thefts, smuggling, or increased purchases of ingredients used in homemade bombs or mines.

2. Discovery of explosives or mines being clandestinely transported or hidden in caches.

3. Explosions in or bombing of essential utilities and industries.

4. Roadblocks and mines on main lines of communication, power lines, and aqueducts leading to urban centers.

5. Malicious damage to industrial products or factory machinery.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ernesto "Che" Guevara, Guerrilla Warfare, p. 41.
2. William J. Pomeroy, Guerrilla and Counter-Guerrilla Warfare: Liberation and Suppression in the Present Period, p. 71.
3. John J. McCuen, The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War: The Strategy of Counter-Insurgency, p. 329.
4. Ibid.
5. Richard Barnet, America's Confrontation with Insurgent Movements Around the World, p. 268.
6. John M. Breit, et al., A Summary Report of Research Requirements for Sensing and Averting Critical Insurgent Actions in an Urban Environment, (hereafter referred to as "Summary Report"), p. 22.
7. Robert Moss, Urban Guerrillas, pp. 36-38.
8. The author was present when this incident took place.
9. Moss, p. 107.
10. Summary Report, pp. 22-26.

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