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VIETNAM: MAO VS. CLAUSEWITZ

By

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Vietnam: Mao vs. Clausewitz

Individual Study Project

by

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7 May 1976

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and its impact on US Army doctrine is developed. Counterinsurgent theory and doctrine is explored and finally the Vietnam War strategy is examined from the perspective of both General's Giap and Westmoreland. The conclusion is that Clausewitzian doctrine did not contribute to the American defeat but that the misapplication of it did. The concluding observation is that Americans, particularly military men, must study the war to determine its lessons and must not turn their backs on the war or consider it an aberration.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

For the first time in its history, the United States has lost a war. The defeat in Vietnam shocked the American people, who are accustomed to wars that are total, violent and victorious. During the Vietnam War, the Vietcong insurgents, aided by North Vietnam, fought a strategic revolutionary war using guerrilla tactics, while the United States continued to use a conventional strategy which had proved successful in fighting the Communists in Korea. But Vietnam was not Korea. While both sides in Korea followed the traditional Clausewitzian philosophy of waging war, the North Vietnamese leaders were not so obliging in Vietnam.

The Communist guerrilla army in Vietnam essentially followed the precepts of Mao Tse-tung for fighting a "Peoples War", modified by the influence of General Vo Nguyen Giap. The Americans, on the other hand, while continuing to espouse Clausewitzian doctrine, amended it by the gradual application of force, rather than by the intensive application of overwhelming force to achieve shock which would destroy the will of the enemy to resist. Obviously, neither Mao nor Clausewitz can be interpreted so simplistically; both are more subtle and more complex. The basic purpose of this paper is to examine Clausewitz and Mao in thorough investigation and to compare Clausewitz' beliefs with those of Mao as both were demonstrated on

the battlefield in Vietnam. The basic issue to be resolved is the utility of using the Clausewitzian approach to combat Maoist guerrilla warfare.

Specifically, the question to be answered by this study is: Did the application of the Clausewitzian philosophy of war by the United States during the Vietnam War to combat a Maoist guerrilla war contribute to the American defeat? If the American defeat was the result of implementing a Clausewitzian strategy which was irrelevant to the Vietnam situation, then subsequent research should seek other strategies which are relevant to defeating Maoist type wars. If, however, the defeat was due to the improper execution of Clausewitzian strategy, then follow-on research should focus on how the strategy was abused in Vietnam and how this abuse can be prevented on future insurgent battlefields. The current popular thinking in America is that interventions of the Vietnam sort should be avoided in the future. But American public opinion is notoriously fickle; it is surely in the national interest to probe the Vietnam wound to determine what went wrong militarily, if for no other reason than to insure that history does not repeat itself. If this is so, then it is important, both to the military and to the American public who may be called upon again to support a counterinsurgency, to investigate and to analyze the opposing military strategies that clashed in Vietnam. Before continuing, a short word on definitions is necessary;



1. Clausewitzian Strategy - The theory of war that Karl von Clausewitz advanced in his book "Vom Kriege" (On-War).
2. Maoist Guerrilla War - The theory of guerrilla war as found in the writings of Mao Tse-tung.
3. Vietnam War - The military operations conducted in North and South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos during the period 1965-1975.

As noted, the major focus of this paper is on the military aspects of the war in Vietnam. While the isolation of the military component of national power from its other aspects (political, economic, technological and psychological) is possible intellectually, it is not possible practically. The will of the people, the adequacy of political leadership, the economic situation, are examples of elements of national power and national programs that may have had more to do with the defeat in Vietnam than did the military strategy that was used. It is not the purpose here to argue this point. For the purpose of evaluating the efficacy of the US military strategy in Vietnam, these elements will be assumed to be neutral and to have had no effect on the outcome of the war.

In an historical study, the task is to recreate the past accurately and honestly and to relate the relevant historical data to the investigation of the problem. To achieve this it will be necessary to search the literature to document the strategies of Clausewitz and Mao Tse-tung in their pristine state and to determine how these strategies were interpreted by those who professed to adhere to them.

In the case of Clausewitz, this is extremely important because his major work, On War, has been variously interpreted. While Mao does not suffer from this particular problem, it is nonetheless important that a study be made of his theories particularly as they were implemented by his chief successful practitioner--General Vo Nguyen Giap. Next it will be necessary to examine counterinsurgent doctrine from the American perspective, to determine its relevance vis-a-vis the Clausewitzian philosophy in combating Maoist warfare. After completing this task, the strategies of the opposing sides of the Vietnam war will be studied to ascertain if there were any significant deviations from the pure theories of either Mao or Clausewitz. Finally, Clausewitzian strategy will be analyzed to determine its value with respect to the Maoist model and with respect to counterinsurgent doctrine. Hopefully, the conclusion drawn from this analysis will give some indication of the suitability of using a Clausewitzian approach to defeat a Maoist guerrilla war.

There are several methodological limitations that must be considered. First, by its very nature historical research is empirically weak and is extremely vulnerable to the selection and interpretation of sources by the author. To this end, sources of information will be clearly identified to permit verification. Secondly, it must be acknowledged that by centering on military strategy, the political, cultural and economic factors which also affect the outcome of any war will not be emphasized. This limitation will be mitigated somewhat by focusing

on some of these factors, particularly the political, when discussing the nature of Maoist guerrilla war. A third limitation is the necessity to use secondary sources to describe the strategies of Clausewitz, who wrote in German and Mao, who, of course, wrote in Chinese. However, this limitation is balanced by the excellent English translations of their works that are generally available.

A final word. Practically, it is recognized that any conclusions that may be drawn concerning either the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the Clausewitzian strategy that was used by the United States to combat a Maoist guerrilla war in Vietnam will have only limited utility in assessing the value of such a strategy to combat Maoist wars outside of Vietnam. The cultural, economic and geopolitical factors must be considered when generalizing to future wars in different environments. It is also understood that writing about such a controversial event so soon after that event runs the risk of having future research invalidate any tentative conclusions which may be reached. But this danger is inherent in most historical research. Nevertheless, the problem is important enough to investigate today, rather than waiting decades until all the returns are in.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the literature has not discovered any studies that directly relate to the project, i.e. comparing the Maoist strategy with that of the Clausewitzian in the context of the Vietnam War. In this regard, Admiral Wylie, in his 1968 book Military Strategy, made the point that "it would be interesting if some scholar were to take the time to contrast Clausewitz and Mao in thorough investigation . . . [so] we could learn from this how better to combat their brand of Communism." John M. Collins, in his 1973 book Grand Strategy, does evaluate the opposing strategies, however, he does not link these strategies to Mao or to Clausewitz. While his chapter on "The Vietnam War: A Case Study in Grand Strategy" has been extremely helpful, it also falls short of the intended scope of this project. There are many other books, articles and studies that deal with parts of this research paper (Mao strategy, Clausewitzian strategy, counter-insurgent doctrine, and military strategy in Vietnam), however, none were found that relate each of these aspects to another, which is the theme of this study.

In viewing the guerrilla in historical perspective in Chapter III, E. Adamson Hoebel's text book on anthropology and Robert Leckie's Warfare were very useful in characterizing the pre-historic forms of warfare. To anyone interested in the history of guerrilla warfare, Robert B. Asprey's monumental two volume survey on the history of guerrilla war, War in the Shadows, which looks at insurgencies from Darius to Nixon, is indispensable.

Like all survey's, however, it frequently (and necessarily) treats these wars superficially. Fortunately, that is not the case with his treatment of the French and American wars in Indochina, since virtually the entire second volume is devoted to these struggles. Other beneficial general works on guerrilla warfare were Lewis Gann's splendid short account, Guerrillas in History, covering all periods, N. I. Klonis' Guerrilla Warfare, which considers guerrilla warfare from Napoleon to the present day and Sir Robert Thompson's Revolutionary War in World Strategy, 1945-1969, which, as its title implies, is a study of Communist insurgencies in the post World War II era. This last has the added attraction of being written by an expert in the successful suppression of guerrilla war. Finally, James Eliot Cross' small book, Conflict in the Shadows looks at the nature of guerrilla warfare and formulates a course of action designed to defeat it.

The development of the four case studies in Chapter III, required the use of a variety of books. Among the most helpful in the Maccabeus case was the Douay Bible and Edward Longstreth's Decisive Battles of the Bible. In documenting the Welsh insurgency Asprey's and Gann's books were excellent sources and in the case of the Penninsular War, Stanley G. Payne's, A History of Spain and Portugal was used for general background information. Incidentally Payne, who is a prolific writer on the history of Spain, has produced in this two volume work the first general history of the Iberian

Penninsula available in English. More important from a military aspect was David Chandler's, Napoleon, which is a profusely illustrated but relatively shallow work on all of Napoleon's campaigns. Again, Asprey's book was relied on in this section of the paper. For the final case study, the Greek Civil War, the previously mentioned books by Thompson and Klonis were used. Both books have excellent sections on the Greek Guerrilla War, but probably the best single, short account of the several considered is LTC Edward R. Wainhaus' article "Guerrilla War in Greece" which appeared in the June, 1957 edition of Military Review. Before turning to the works used in Chapter IV, a word should be said about the nature of guerrilla warfare. One can do no better than to turn to Samuel B. Griffith's translation of Mao Tse-tung's Yu Chi Chan (On Guerrilla Warfare), to discover the nature of guerrilla warfare.

In outlining modern guerrilla strategy in Chapter IV, the most important work from a conceptual standpoint and one to which the author is deeply indebted is LTC George R. Stotser's piece on the "Concepts of Guerrilla Warfare and Insurgent Strategy." It is an extremely perceptive and well written work. In describing Clausewitz' contribution to guerrilla theory, reliance was placed on O. J. Matthis Jolles' translation of On War. This particular edition contains both Book's V and VI, which are often omitted by other translators as being too technical. See Anatol Rapaport, for example. Unfortunately,

it is Book VI that contains Clausewitz' views on People's War. Stotser correctly contends that Clausewitz was the originator of systematic thinking on guerrilla theory, however, Robert Asprey takes a much more critical view. While Lenin's views were not dwelled upon in detail, because of the military orientation of this paper, the Edward M. Collins book, War, Politics, and Power, has a very fine analysis of the influence of Clausewitz on Lenin by way of Marx and Engels. William J. Pomeroy's, Guerrilla Warfare and Marxism is also an important secondary source on Lenin's writing on guerrilla warfare.

The documentation of T. E. Lawrence's views of guerrilla warfare, relied on his own book, Seven Pillars of Wisdom as the primary source. The 1935 edition, which was used, was preceded by a shorter work Revolt in the Desert on the same subject. A valuable book for anyone attempting to understand this complex person is Erik Lonroth's, Lawrence of Arabia, a critical appreciation of Lawrence that has an excellent introduction which surveys the sparse literature that pertains to Lawrence.

The problem with studying Mao Tse-tung, is that one is overwhelmed by the available material. Edger Snow's, Red Star over China is the authoritative work on Mao's life from early childhood until age forty-three. It is based on interviews, that were conducted with Mao and his contemporaries just before the outbreak of World War II. Other books that were consulted were Stuart Schram's,

Robert Payne's and Jules Archer's biographies of Mao, each of which is appropriately, if unimaginatively, titled Mao Tse-tung. On Mao's guerrilla warfare theory the Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Vol. I-IV and the Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-tung were used. However, here one must be careful, because, as Stuart Schram points out, these works often contain textual changes from the original.

Essentially, Mao wrote five important military works on guerrilla warfare, as Schram once again points out. By far the most important are Yu Chi Chan and the pamphlet that resulted from a series of lectures given to his guerrilla leaders. Samuel B. Griffith, a retired marine general, translated Yu Chi Chan which appears in his book Mao Tse-tung on Guerrilla Warfare. The pamphlet was translated by Stuart R. Schram and appears under the title, Mao Tse-tung, Basic Tactics. Taken together, these two books reveal Mao's philosophy of war better than any other source. Asprey and Stotser, also provide good supplemental material.

Turning to the Clausewitzian strategy, the reader is faced with the problem of determining which of the many fine translations of On War to use. The Modern Library translation by Professor Jolles, which first appeared in 1943, is used here. Although there are several English translations available, this was the first by an American. This excellent edition has two benefits which should appeal to the student of Clausewitz; first, it contains all of the books of Vom Kriege, including his writings on People's War and



secondly, and more importantly, the Clausewitz Casyndekan is keyed to the Jolles translation. The Casyndekan, a staff project of Casyndekan, Inc., reduces, through the aid of a computer, Clausewitz's thoughts to twenty-seven conceptual headings (offensive, friction, will, means, etc.). Then within these categories, passages from On War are reproduced and keyed to the page in the Jolles book in which the quotation appears. It is an invaluable aid to the researcher. Other more recent editions of On War are either edited (usually omitting Books V and VI) or use only selected portions of the work. These books, especially Anatole Rapoport's, are important, primarily for their introductions which give different interpretations of Clausewitzian thought as it relates to today's environment. Generally, these editions have been inspired by the debate of Clausewitz's relevance to the nuclear age. In this respect, J. M. Gabriel's, Clausewitz Revisited . . ., is extremely useful in understanding the viewpoints of the two chief opposing writers in the debate, Anatole Rapoport and Raymond Aron.

Roger Parkinson's, biography of Clausewitz is the only detailed and complete examination of Clausewitz and his times in English. However, he devotes only one Chapter to On War, per se. There is a splendid small book on the Principles of War, written by Clausewitz for the guidance of the Crown Prince of Prussia. This book is important because it presents the views of Clausewitz, which appeared later in On War, in short form much as Yu Chi Chan did for Mao's thought.

There are several good sources that document the Clausewitzian influence on the American military establishment. The Department of the Army Field Manual (FM 101-5) on the Operations of Army Forces in the Field (1968) delineates military thinking in the US Army on the waging of war. This manual shows striking parallels to Clausewitzian philosophy. Goerlitz's book, The History of the German General Staff shows Clausewitz's pervasive influence on German military thought through World War II. Both this book and Edward M. Earle's, Makers of Modern Strategy, give accounts of Clausewitz's influence on French military strategy as well. Professor Weigley's book, The American Way of War, discusses the influence that French and German military thought had on American military doctrine and it is the best single source on the evolution of American military strategic doctrine and its debt to Karl Von Clausewitz.

In the field of counterinsurgent theory, one must start with the pre-eminent figure--Sir Robert Thompson. His Defeating Communist Insurgency, although published in 1966, is the classic study. Two other general works that are important to note are David Galula's Counterinsurgency Warfare and Charles W. Thayer's Guerrilla which were both extremely helpful in charting the theoretical approach to counterinsurgent warfare. The Diary of Che Guervera, edited by Robert Scheer, gives the reader an appreciation of how it feels to be on the receiving end of a counterinsurgency campaign. Of course, Professor A. Maslow's book, Motivation and Personality was used to examine the theory of the Hierarchy of Needs. Department of the Army

Field Manuals 31-16 and 100-20, dealing with US Army counterinsurgency doctrine are indispensable source materials. FM 31-16 indicates the doctrine as it was available in 1963, while FM 100-20 shows how sophisticated the doctrine has become as a result of the Army's experience in Vietnam. The literature on counterinsurgency has blossomed since the early sixties and there are innumerable books on library shelves dealing with the subject. The ones used for this paper are ones that are generally available and that cover the subject rather well. One can do no better than read Sir Robert Thompson's book on the subject. There are also many magazine articles that discuss both counterinsurgent theory and doctrine. Military Review and Army Magazine are excellent sources for articles on the subject, as is the Marine Corps Gazette.

When the researcher turns to the Vietnam War, he is literally faced with stack upon stack of books to choose from. For the American side of the War, General Westmoreland's recently published book, A Soldier Reports, is necessary to understand the period 1965 to 1968. Robert Asprey's, War in the Shadows, has an excellent overview of the war in Volume II. John Collin's book, Grand Strategy, Practice and Principle, which is highly recommended, contains an excellent case study of the war and has the clearest discussion of both American and North Vietnamese objectives, policies and strategies. Edger O'Ballance gives an outline of the war in his 1976 book, The Wars in Vietnam. It is basically neutral in its approach, while the previously mentioned book by Asprey is biased against the US establishment. The same is true of David Halberstrom's, The Best and the Brightest.

An extremely readable book on the pacification side of the war is General Lewis W. Walt's, Strange War, Strange Strategy. Also very good from the pacification angle is Sir Robert Thompson's two small books, No Exit from Vietnam and Revolutionary War in World Strategy, 1945-1969. Don Oberdorfer's TET, is a journalist's account of the Tet offensive and has a good chapter on the North Vietnamese debate over the Tet decision. Visions of Victory, which is a compilation of North Vietnamese military writings, 1964-1968, edited by Patrick J. McGarvy is also necessary to an understanding of the debates over strategy in North Vietnam. It is valuable for its analytical introduction alone. The Chapter by Bernard Brodie, in Noble Frankland and Christopher Dowling's Decisive Battles of the Twentieth Century is another recently published (1976) account of the Tet offensive.

For an understanding of General Giap and his strategy the following books were used: Big Victory, Great Task and People's War, People's Army. Both of these books were written by General Giap. Two other books were also helpful. The Military Art of People's War, selected writings of General Vo Nguyen Giap, edited with an introduction by Russel Stetler, and a very sympathetic book by Robert J. O'Neill entitled General Giap Politician and Strategist.

Other books that might be useful to the researcher looking into the area covered by this paper are listed in the selected bibliography.

## CHAPTER III

### GUERRILLA WARFARE IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Guerrilla warfare is probably the oldest form of warfare known to mankind. Prehistoric man waged war with stone weapons that were designed to replicate the piercing, tearing, and goring attributes of the fierce, wild animals that he stalked. Man's tactics of stealth, kill, and withdrawal were the same tactics that were used by the animals that he hunted.<sup>1</sup> The primitive tribes of today still use these ancient ambush stratagems. Hoebel writes that, ". . . Ruthless guerrilla fighting is known among all the Negritos . . . and the more primitive Indonesians prefer to waylay the unwary."<sup>2</sup> During World War II, the Papaun warriors of New Guinea ambushed the Japanese from the protective cover of the steaming jungle, while Mao Tse-tung fought his successful anti-Japanese guerrilla campaign following the tactical principles laid down by Sun Tzu almost 2,500 years ago.<sup>3</sup>

Guerrilla warfare is not only an ancient form of warfare, it is also a largely misunderstood form of war. Even today, military experts cannot reach concensus on its definition. Too often, Guerrilla War, Revolutionary War, Anti-Colonial War, and Partisan War are used interchangeably.<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this paper, Guerrilla War is defined as:

A struggle between a constituted government or occupation regime organized insurgents frequently supported from without but acting violently from within, against the political, social, economic, and civil vulnerabilities of the regime to bring about its internal destruction, or overthrow through the use of guerrilla tactics.

The underlined portion has been added to the US Army's definition of insurgent war to differentiate guerrilla war from other types of internal struggle, such as civil war or coup d'etat, which may or may not use guerrilla tactics. The meaning of Guerrilla War will become clearer as some historical examples of its use are examined.

The First and Second Books of Maccabaeus in the Roman Catholic (Douay) Bible record the Jewish guerrilla struggle, led by Judas Maccabaeus, against the Seleucids.<sup>6</sup> These brutal invaders, not only plundered the sacred temple at Jerusalem, but forced all of Judea to renounce the laws and customs of Moses and to substitute in its place to renounce th laws and customs of Moses and to substitute in its place the worship of the Hellenic Gods. These Greco-Syrian occupiers used torture and terror against all who resisted. But not all of the Judeans remained docile. Judas Maccabaeus, together with his brothers and his father, rebelled and fled to the hidden caves in the mountains north of Jersalem. From this rugged base area, Judas in 166 B.C., rallied the Jewish militants to his side, and struck blow after blow against the dispersed Seleucid garrisons. The guerrillas used their detailed knowledge of the terrain, intelligence gathered from the Jewish people, and mobility to defeat superior Seleucid forces at times and places of Maccabaeus' choosing. Expedition after expedition of well armed soldiers were dispatched to

destroy Maccabaeus and his guerrillas, but these searches failed because Maccabaeus had a cause that his followers were willing to die for and because he had the support of the people. Maccabaeus' band grew larger with each victory.<sup>7</sup>

One such victory, which was in the classic guerrilla tradition, occurred at Emmaus. The Syrian general Lysias, in command of a formidable force of 40,000 infantry and 7,000 cavalry, camped at Emmaus, South of Jerusalem, to prepare for military operations against Judas Maccabaeus. Lysias, who remained at Emmaus with the Army, dispatched his lieutenant, Georgias, with 6,000 soldiers and horsemen to attack the Jewish mountain stronghold during the night. But Maccabaeus was warned of the Seleucid plan by his spies among the people, so leaving his campfires in the hills burning, he maneuvered his guerrilla force out of the mountains to attack the main Syrian army at Emmaus. His surprise attack worked. At first light, while Georgias vainly searched for him among the caves and ravines in the mountains Maccabaeus, with only 3,000 men, surprised and routed Lysias' superior force in the valley. By the time that Georgias saw the smoke from the burning Syrian camp, it was all over. As the Seleucids retreated northward, the guerrillas completed the victory by capturing and looting the Seleucid baggage train.

But the campaign did not end with this victory. The Seleucids continued to send armies against Maccabaeus until he committed a fatal blunder in 160 B.C. Fatal not only to his independence movement, but to himself as well. His mistake was to accept a

conventional battle against a vastly superior force; a mistake that was to be repeated over two thousand years later by another guerrilla leader, Vo Nguyen Giap, but without nearly so disastrous a result. Thus ended Judas Maccabaeus' Anti-Colonial Rebellion against the Seleucids.<sup>8</sup> Since this campaign illustrates most of the characteristics of guerrilla warfare that will be encountered in later discussions, it will be profitable to digress for a moment to examine them.

The nature of guerrilla warfare can be approached from many different perspectives, but the one used in this paper follows the model shown at Figure 1. Basically, there are two considerations: The Political and the Military. In practice, these two factors interact and are interdependent to the point that they cannot be separated. In fact, this intimate interrelationship between the political and the military is probably the most distinguishing feature of guerrilla warfare. This point must be kept in mind during the remaining discussion.<sup>9</sup>

The first characteristic of guerrilla warfare, and the one from which all others stem, is that the guerrilla uses the strategy that he does because he is too weak to fight and win a conventional campaign. The spectrum of violence, (see Figure 2), illustrates that guerrilla tactics will be resorted to when non-violent means fail and when the insurgent is too weak in relation to the conservator government to escalate to more violent forms of warfare.



Make no mistake--the guerrilla would fight a conventional campaign if he were strong enough. Indeed, later it will be shown that if a guerrilla war enters Phase III,<sup>4</sup> this is precisely what happens. Surely, Maccabaeus would have sought a quick decisive battle over the Seleucids, if he had the power to do so. Paradoxically, although the guerrilla is weak, the war from his point of view is total. The guerrilla commits every resource that he has and every trick that is in his bag to the struggle.

The very root of the struggle is the cause for which the guerrilla fights. The cause must be important--important enough to risk one's life. In the beginning, the Judeans fought for the right to practice their religion free from interference, which to the Jewish people was a right that was fundamental to their existence. Later, they fought for political liberty. This dynamic nature of the cause is more indicative of 20th Century Communist insurgencies than it is of earlier movements, however.

The cause can be factored into the motivation that drives the guerrilla. Table I shows four types of causes. The Anti-Colonial Rebellion is one that is directed at achieving political independence from some domineering power. A second type, the Separatist, is aimed at secession--a homogeneous group within a community, for either political, cultural, racist or religious reasons, wishes to separate itself from the remainder of the community. The third division is

THE NATURE OF GUERRILLA WARFARE

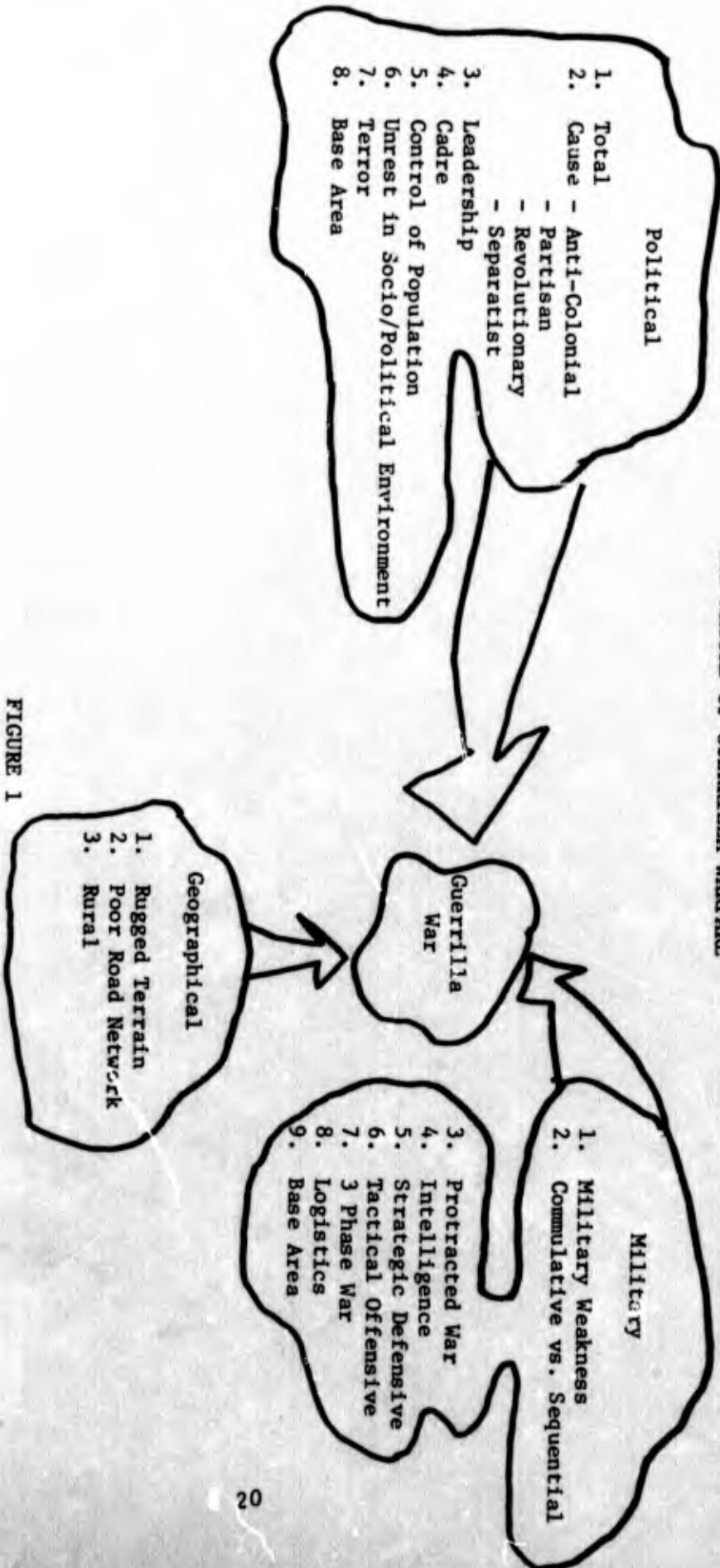
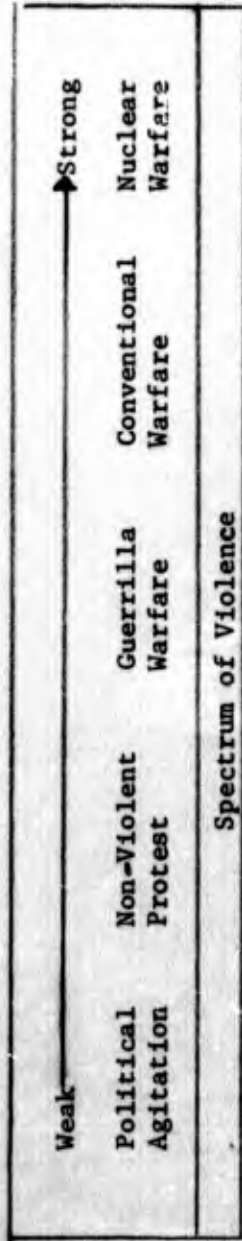


FIGURE 1

FIGURE 2



a more limited one. The Partisan movement cooperates with conventional armies to overthrow a power that has invaded its country and it normally is interested in only the restoration of the status quo. The last type of guerrilla war is called Revolutionary War. Sir Robert Thompson identifies this as: "A form of warfare which enables a small ruthless minority to gain control by force over the people of a country and thereby to seize power by violent and unconstitutional means."<sup>10</sup> Again, all of these types envision the use of guerrilla strategy to achieve their goal.

To give direction to achieving the aim of the guerrilla struggle, there must be a resolute leader and an elite cadre of determined men. The leader and the cadre must articulate the cause if the movement is to grow; for if a guerrilla movement does not grow, it will die. Maccabaeus and his family fulfilled this need for the Judean rebel movement. The guerrilla must also have the popular support or, at the very least, the neutrality of the population. This is the sine qua non of guerrilla warfare and its critical importance cannot be overemphasized. That Maccabaeus had this popular support is evident from the intelligence that he had received about the Syrian plans at the battle of Emmaus. Intelligence of the plans and of the movements of the enemy are as crucial to the survival of the guerrilla force as food is to the survival of the individual.

TABLE I

TYPE

WAR	Anti Colonial	Separtist	Partisan	Revolutionary
Maccabaeus 168 BC	X			
Wales-13th-14th Centuries		X		
Paoli-Corsica 1755	X			
Spanish Guerrillas 1808			X	
Greene's Southern Campaign 1778			X	
India, 1793	X			
US Civil War-Mosby 1861-65			X	
Phillipines 1899	X			
Boer War 1899	X			
Arabia-Lawrence 1916-1918			X	
Resistance WWII 1939-1945			X	
Greek Civil War 1946				X
China (Mao) 1949				X
VietMinh-1945-1954	X			
Israeli 1948		X		
VietCong 1957-1975				X

A corollary to the support of the population is that there must be unrest or that unrest may be created in the political or social environment of the country. In the case of Maccabaeus the unrest was already present in the suppression of the Jewish worship of Jehova. Maccabaeus became the focus of this unrest and was thereby able to exploit it. In more recent times in the underdeveloped world, land reform has been the issue that guerrilla leaders generally exploit to rally support to their movement. Terror, both selective and random, has also been used, particularly in modern times, to gain political control of the population.

While the discussion thus far has centered on the political aspects of the guerrilla phenomenon, the remainder of this discussion will turn towards the military side of the equation. To begin with, a guerrilla war is essentially a cumulative strategy, especially in the first and second phases. That is, victory depends upon a number of individual actions, none of which are decisive, that aggregate into a "critical mass" which in the end produces victory. Opposed to this is conventional sequential strategy, which through a series of actions, each dependent upon the last, results in a decisive battle in which the enemy is defeated.<sup>11</sup> It is the juxtaposition of these two strategies in the context of the Vietnam War that is the essence of this paper.

Next, the concept of protracted war must be examined. Since the guerrilla is committed to a cumulative war, he must necessarily be

prepared to fight a protracted war. The short, violent war is a luxury that only the most powerful can afford, therefore, patience as a guerrilla virtue is second only to persistence. General Giap because of his impatience to fight large, conventional, decisive battles against the French almost lost that war for the VietMinh. It was shown earlier that Maccabaeus' fatal blunder was his decision to pit his guerrilla army against the more powerful Seleucids in a conventional set piece battle.

The guerrilla always fights a defensive war using offensive tactics. That is, the guerrilla only fights when he is certain of winning. To do this he must have accurate information concerning the plans and movements of the enemy and he must deny the enemy this knowledge of his own plans. Earlier it was shown that Maccabaeus was able to do this through the agis of a friendly population. Maccabaeus' demonstration of the offensive tactics of mobility, surprise and mass at the decisive point at the Battle of Emmaus is characteristic of all of the great insurgent leaders. His reliance on using the arms, food, and treasure of the defeated army to enemy to supply his own force is another characteristic of guerrilla fighting that is prevelent thoroughout history. The need to avoid warfare when outnumbered, another classic guerrilla principle, requires that the insurgent establish a base area to which he can repair to be free from the attacks of his enemies. The rugged hills north of Jerusalem provided this sanctuary for Maccabaeus. The famous "Long March" of Mao Tse-tung was a search for such an area.

Finally, Judas Maccabaeus' guerrilla movement went through the three phases of guerrilla warfare that have been alluded to several times previously. Phase I is the covert, defensive phase that is devoted to the establishment and development of the base area, the recruitment of adherents, and the preparation of the population to support the guerrilla. The second phase is the guerrilla warfare phase, during which active guerrilla warfare is conducted. This phase lasts until the guerrilla force has become large enough to successfully engage the enemy in large scale military operations. This last or offensive phase is similar to open conventional warfare wherein the guerrilla seeks to decisively defeat the enemy army, thereby, gaining control of the government. Unfortunately, Maccabaeus passed into phase three prematurely and was defeated. But not all guerrilla movements negotiate all of the phases; for example, the Castro movement in Cuba won during the second phase, because the Batista government did not have the resolve to continue. Against a resolute government, however, all three phases will probably be required. With this foundation the examination of the other three types of guerrilla warfare will be clearer.

The next type of insurgency that will be considered is the Separatist Movements. Examples of such movements are numerous and occur throughout history and may be classified as ethnic, religious, or political. The Turkish-Greek Cypriot problem typifies the ethnic class; the current Irish Catholic and Protestant terror



campaign in Northern Ireland is an example of a religious separatist guerrilla war and the struggle between Wales and England during the 13th century, which is examined below, illustrates a political separatist war. It must be noted that these classifications are amorphous and one tends to merge into another. While there seems to be political overtones to all, the driving motivation determined in which class they were placed at Table 1.

Winston Churchill writes that the ancient English monarchs failed to pay sufficient attention to the internal security problems of the British Isles because of their "fatal preoccupation" with France. Edward I, on his return from France at the end of the thirteenth Century, was determined to subdue the troublesome Welsh once and for all. The Welsh, under the leadership of Llywelyn, were equally determined to preserve what was spiritually, if not legally, a Welsh national state.<sup>12</sup> But Llywelyn, although outnumbered, had many of the advantages that accrue to the guerrilla that were discussed earlier.

In the first place, the wild mountainous terrain of Wales offered the guerrillas a secure base area from which they could strike out at the dispersed English garrisons. Secondly, the Welsh had a history of conducting guerrilla warfare that could be traced through several generations. Giraldus Cambrensis, a 12th century scholar who advised Henry II during the earlier campaigns against the Welsh, wrote:

This light armed people, relying more on their activity than on their strength, cannot struggle for the field of battle . . . [But] though defeated and put to flight one day, they are ready to resume the combat on the next, neither dejected by their loss nor their dishonor . . . They harass the enemy by embuscades and nightiy sallies . . . Bold in the first onset, they cannot bear a repulse . . . [but] their courage manifests itself chiefly in retreat, when they frequently return, and, like the Parthians, shoot their arrows behind them . . . Neither oppressed by hunger or cold, nor fatigued by martial labours, nor despondent in adversity . . . they are as easy to overcome in a single battle, as difficult to subdue in a protracted war.<sup>13</sup>

A remarkable exposition of classic guerrilla war, as valid today as on that day hundreds of years ago when it was written. Llywelyn also had the support of the Welsh people, which is another indispensable factor for the guerrilla. Finally, almost unique in guerrilla warfare, Llywelyn had a better weapon, the longbow, than the English conventional force.<sup>14</sup>

With all of this going for them, it is difficult to see how the Welsh could lose. But lose they did, for their adversary, Edward I, was an unusually astute strategist, who used all of the weapons at his command to defeat them. In 1277, Edward advanced on the Welsh base area with a heavy force, establishing strong points as he went, always marching along the sea and cooperating with his fleet, which blockaded Llywelyn's force. With his food supplies interrupted and unable to induce the wily Edward away from the coast and into the interior, Llywelyn called a halt to the war. But peace

did not last long, for in 1282 Wales again Phoenix-like erupted in rebellion (another characteristic of guerrilla warfare). Edward once again used the same joint strategy that had proved so successful in the first campaign. He combined land and sea forces in a swift campaign that resulted in Llywelyn's death and in the collapse of the centuries old Welsh insurgency.<sup>15</sup>

Unlike the failure of the Welsh insurgency, partisan guerrilla warfare has generally been successful. It requires cooperation with a conventional army and some examples of this type guerrilla activity are the various resistance movements on continental Europe during World War II, the Arab operations against the Turks in World War I under the leadership of the legendary Lawrence of Arabia and the Spanish guerrilla campaign that assisted Wellington during the Peninsular War. The latter instance will be reviewed because it not only represents one of the first modern guerrilla wars, but also because of its great influence on Karl von Clausewitz, who was the first military writer to systematically analyze guerrilla warfare.

In 1807, Napoleon was the master of Europe, with only England remaining of the great powers to challenge his authority. Because Nelson's victory at Trafalgar had made a seaward military invasion of England a closed issue, Napoleon devised the Continental System to bring England to its knees economically. It was a system whereby nations that were occupied by France were required to embargo British

goods and in which neutral nations were threatened with force if they did not enforce the "blockade." However, Portugal, long a trading partner and ally of England, refused to become a partner to Napoleon's scheme, consequently, in 1807, Napoleon moved to close Portugal's ports to English ships. With the connivance of the weak Spanish government, France sent her armies through Spain to Portugal and plans were made to divide the Portuguese spoils between them. But Napoleon was not satisfied with Portugal alone and soon occupied Spain as well, placing Joseph Bonapart on the throne. This led to what English historians refer to as the Peninsular War and to what is recorded in Spanish history as the War of Independence.<sup>16</sup>

The immediate result of the French occupation was the spontaneous revolt of the Spanish people and the electrifying defeat of a French Army by Spanish regular forces at Bailen. For the first time a Napoleonic Army had been defeated on the continent. Napoleon quickly avenged the loss and pacified all of Spain, but not before the British were able to land a small force in Portugal.<sup>17</sup> This developed a stalemate that was not broken until 1809, when Sir Arthur Wellesley (later Wellington) arrived in Portugal. The war now took on the partisan character that was its hallmark until the French defeat in 1814. Wellington wisely chose a strategy of attrition, using his small mainforce army primarily as a threat and counting on the barren Spanish countryside and the resolute Spanish guerrillas to defeat the French. It has been said that in

Spain large formations starve and small armies are destroyed.<sup>18</sup>

In fact, Robert Asprey credits Wellington with using "his army as a piece of cheese to attract the rodent enemy into a guerrilla trap."<sup>19</sup>

Because of the mountainous terrain and poor road network, the guerrillas had many ideal base areas from which to strike the hated French and to which to retreat if need be; all the while performing important missions for Wellington. Security was the prime British concern which the guerrillas performed for them admirably. Wellington was never in doubt of the enemy's dispositions and conversely, the French were figuratively blinded by the guerrillas of knowledge of British movements. Neither were the French well informed of the plans of their own dispersed forces, because the guerrillas effectively interrupted the French lines of communication. As a result, French couriers often had to be accompanied by armed escorts which numbered in the hundreds and the French had to allocate large forces to control the countryside. But the premier function that the guerrillas served was that of denying food to the French armies that were accustomed to living off of the land. Liddell-Hart estimates that the French Marshal Massena lost 25,000 men at the siege of Torres Vedras, only 2,000 of whom died as a result of combat.<sup>20</sup>

In the frustration caused by this effective guerrilla campaign, the French turned to terror to pacify the Spanish interior in much the same way as the Germans did almost 150 years later, by exacting wholesale punishment in retribution for guerrilla acts. Rape, riot,

and public execution of scores of Spanish civilians were everyday affairs. The guerrilla, in turn, countered with the murder, torture, and mutilation of French prisoners. Brutal terror runs as a dark theme through guerrilla wars throughout history and is one of its less humane distinguishing characteristics.

But Wellington and the guerrillas prevailed. The character of this war, which contributed the Spanish word for "little war"--guerrilla to military science is perhaps best described by Marshal of France Bessieres:

. . . If I concentrate twenty thousand men all communications are lost, and the insurgents will make enormous progress. The coast would be lost as far as Bilbao. We are without resources, because it is only with the greatest pains that the troops can be fed from day to day. The spirit of the population is abominably bad; the retreat of the Army of Portugal had turned their heads. The bands of insurgents grow larger, and recruit themselves actively on every side . . . the Emperor is deceived about Spain: the pacification of Spain does not depend on a battle with the English, who will accept it or refuse it as they please, and who have Portugal behind them for retreat. . . . Everyone allows that we are too widely scattered. We occupy too much territory, we used up our resources without profit and without necessity; we are clinging on to dreams . . .<sup>21</sup>

A sobering testimony to the effectiveness of partisan guerrilla warfare.

Not so effective, however, is the next and last example of guerrilla warfare. Revolutionary warfare differs from the previous examples in that it does not necessarily deal with combating alien forces. Anti-Colonial Rebellions, Separatist Movements, and Partisan war all involved the defeat of foreign, or as in the case of the Wales Separatist Movement, what was perceived to be foreign armies,

and a return to the status quo. Revolutionary warfare, on the other hand, concerns itself with the overthrow of a legal, existing government by a faction of the population. It is war by the "have nots" against the "haves." Because of their inherent weakness, the "have nots" often resort to guerrilla warfare to achieve their political objectives. The Communist terrorists in Malaysia, the Huks in the Phillipines and the Communists in Greece in 1946 are all examples of this type of guerrilla war.

The Greek Civil War or Bandit War as it sometimes has been called was a Communist inspired conflict that began well before the end of World War II. During that war, the Greek Communist Party (KKE) together with its subordinate elements, the National Liberation Front (EAM) and its military arm, the Peoples Liberation Army (ELAS), formed part of the anti-Nazi resistance movement. But it was more interested in the post-war political situation than it was in fighting the Fascist occupation armies. As a matter of fact, the KKE even bargained with the enemy to secure guns and ammunition which they turned against other non-Communist Greek resistance movements. <sup>22</sup> After the Nazi occupation ended, the EAM/ELAS attempted to overthrow the Greek government in Athens in December, 1944. The attempt failed largely because of the British military aid that was provided to the loyal Greek army. The defeated Communists quit Athens and fled to their mountain

strongholds in northern Greece or across the border to Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, where the KKE licked its wounds, trained, and reorganized for their inevitable and eventual return to Greece.<sup>23</sup>

Greece, after World War II, offered the Reds a lucrative guerrilla target. The insurgent mountain base areas were contiguous to friendly Communist states, the conservator Greek government was weak and their army was small and ill-equipped. Indeed, the guerrillas, with the equipment it had received during the war from friend and foe alike, were better equipped than the Greek regular forces. The people, who had suffered mightily during the war, were confused, hungry and disoriented. It would be difficult to find a country that was as ripe for picking than was Greece after World War II.<sup>24</sup>

During 1945-1947, the reorganized ELAS forces conducted their guerrilla campaign in earnest. Intelligence cells called "Yiafka's" were operating throughout Greece providing the ELAS/EAM with the information on enemy forces that was needed for the successful prosecution of the guerrilla activity. Guerrilla bands numbering about one hundred men each ranged over all of Greece, attacking small dispersed army garrisons, police stations, and villages. By Christmas in 1947, almost three-quarters of a million Greek peasants had fled to the safety of the cities; all of this suffering was caused by a guerrilla force of about 23,000 men and women that faced a government army of 182,000.<sup>25</sup>



But 1948, brought American aid to the beleaguered Greek government under the terms of the Truman Doctrine. An American assistance group headed by General James Van Fleet, rearmed the Greek army with modern weapons, which enabled it to expand to 265,000. Despite this aid the war had not yet rounded the corner--the Greek forces attacked the EAM in their mountain redoubts with considerable success, but at the expense of losing large populated areas to the guerrillas. The counter-guerrilla campaign did have the effect of causing the Communists to impress peasants into the ELAS/EAM through terror and intimidation to replace their losses, resulting in the diminution of mass support, which had never really been very strong in the first place.

The Communists now realized that although they were still strong, the initiative had passed to the Greek government. Now two disasters struck the ELAS/EAM in rapid succession; one of their own making and one over which they had no control. The first was the result of an ELAS/EAM decision to destroy the Greek army before it became unbeatable due to American aid. To do this the guerrillas formed large conventional forces and took the offensive against the government troops. The guerrilla army proved to be no match for the Greek army which was now a confident, well led, well equipped force fighting a conventional war that it could understand. The second event that occurred in 1949 was the quarrel between Tito and Stalin that led to the closing of the Greek/Yugoslav border to the ELAS. Denied this sanctuary from which the guerrillas received over half of their supplies and equipment, denied intelligence from the now largely

estranged peasant population, and denied rest by the continual attacks of the Greek army, the insurgency collapsed.<sup>26</sup> Thus ended the last of the four types of guerrilla wars under consideration. Next our attention will be centered on the modern thinkers of guerrilla theory and the two great modern practitioners of the art--Mao Tse-tung and Vo Nguyen Giap.

### CHAPTER III

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Robert Leckie, Warfare, pp. 3-4.
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3. Samuel B. Griffith, Sun Tzu, The Art of War, pp. 45-56.
4. James Eliot Cross, Conflict in the Shadows, pp. 3-4.
5. US Department of the Army, Army Regulations 310-25. 1968, p. 232.
6. First and Second Machabees, Roman Catholic (Douay) Bible.
7. Werner Keller, The Bible as History, pp. 371-373.
8. Edward Lonstreth, Decisive Battles of the Bible, pp. 145-159. Also see I Macc. 3:22-60 and 4:1-23.
9. Sir Robert Thompson, Revolutionary War in World Strategy, 1945-1969, p. 5. Also see Samuel Griffith's translation of Mao Tse-tungs, Yu Chi Chan.
10. Ibid, p. 4.
11. J. C. Wylie, Military Strategy, pp. 23-26
12. Winston Churchill, The Birth of Britain, Vol. p. 298 and Arthur Bryant, The Age of Chivalry, p. 84.
13. Giraldus Cambrensis, The Itinerary Through Wales and the Destruction of Wales, quoted in Lewis H. Gann, Guerrillas in History, p. 3.
14. Ibid.
15. Robert B. Asprey, War in the Shadows, pp. 72-76.
16. Stanley G. Payne, A History of Spain and Portugal, Vol. 2, pp. 422-432.
17. David Chandler, Napoleon, pp. 106-108.

18. Lynn Montross, War Through the Ages, p. 516. Also see Gann, pp. 17-18.
19. Asprey, p. 129.
20. B. H. Liddell Hart, Strategy, p. 115.
21. Asprey, pp. 133-134.
22. Thompson, pp. 43-44.
23. N. I. Klonis, Guerrilla Warfare, pp. 118-119.
24. Thompson, p. 45.
25. LTC Edward R. Wainhaus, "Guerrilla War in Greece", Military Review, Vol. XXXVII, No. 3, June 1957, pp. 20-25.
26. Klonis, pp. 123-127. Also see Thompson, pp. 46-50.

## CHAPTER IV

### MODERN GUERRILLA STRATEGY

Although guerrilla wars have occurred throughout history, it has been only recently that men have recorded their thoughts regarding this fascinating subject. Clausewitz, who will be considered in detail in the next chapter, must be accorded the credit of being the first westerner to consider guerrilla war as a legitimate military strategy. In Chapter XXVI (Arming the Nation) of Book VI (Defense) of On War, Clausewitz examines the utility of using guerrilla warfare as an adjunct to conventional war.<sup>1</sup> Although he coins the term "people's war," it is clear that what Clausewitz had in mind was partisan warfare.<sup>2</sup> A natural enough course for him to take, since presumably he based his deduction on the guerrilla fighting that occurred during the Peninsular War and during Napoleon's Russian Campaign.

Clausewitz did an excellent, though incomplete, job of describing the characteristics of partisan warfare. He described the five conditions necessary for the success of people's war as:

1. That the war is carried on in the interior of the country.
2. That it is not decided by a single catastrophe.
3. That the theater of war embraces a considerable extent of country.
4. That the national character supports the measures.
5. That the country is of a broken and inaccessible nature, either from being mountainous, or by reason of woods and marshes, or from the peculiar mode of cultivation in use.<sup>3</sup>

He emphasized the partisan nature of people's war:

National levies and masses of armed peasants cannot and should not be employed against the main body of the enemy's army, or even against any considerable forces; . . . they must only nibble at the surface and the edges.<sup>4</sup>

Clausewitz also understood the importance of survival to the guerrilla and how critical dispersion and ambush is to his success:

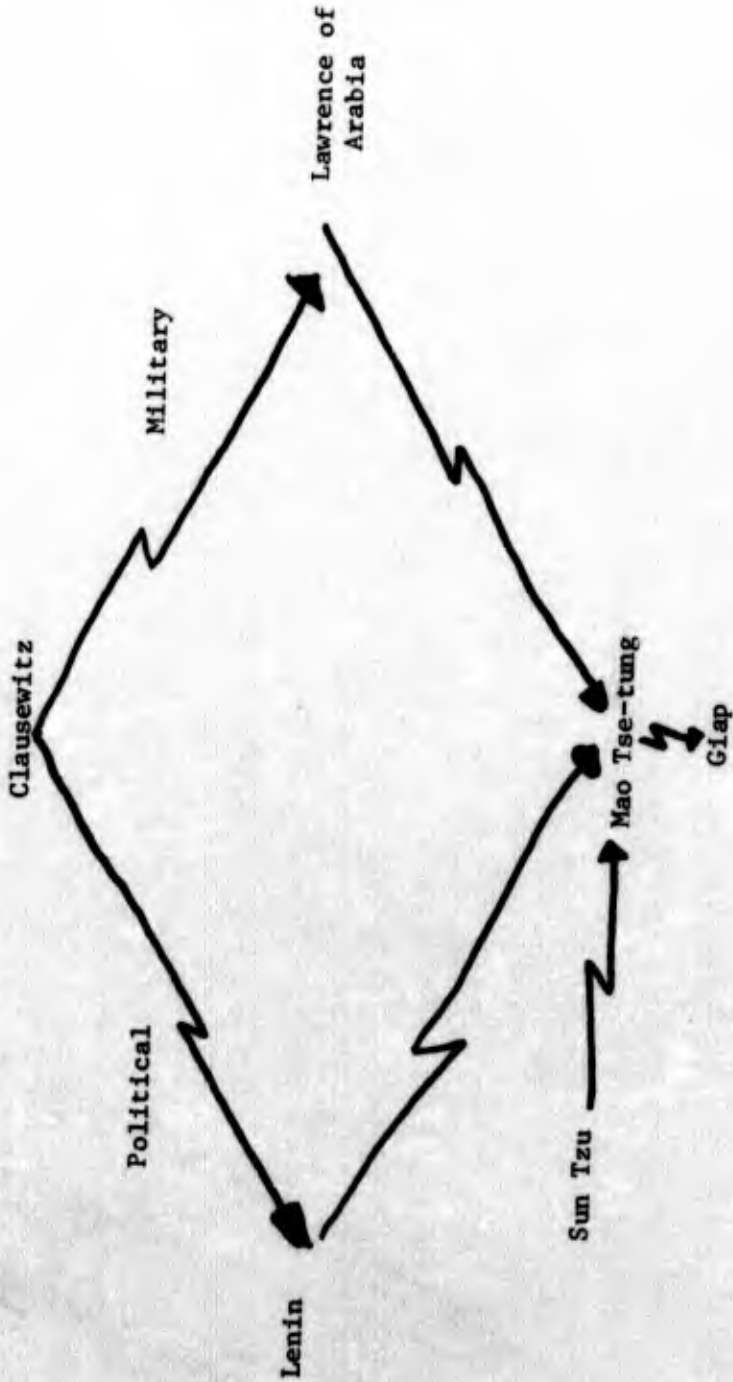
Further, it is a matter of little consequence whether a force . . . is defeated or dispersed, since that is what it is made for, but a body of this description must not be broken up by too great losses in killed, wounded and prisoners; a defeat of that kind would soon cool their ardor . . . but when it is once broken, it should disperse, and continue its defense by unexpected attacks, rather than concentrate and allow itself to be shut up in some narrow last refuge . . .<sup>5</sup>

Finally, Clausewitz realized that what he had written on people's war was a superficial treatment because he felt that "These reflections are more a feeling-out of the truth than an objective analysis. . . ."<sup>6</sup>

But Clausewitz's importance to the development of modern guerrilla theory does not rest on his military observations of the phenomenon; nor does it rest on his linking of the use of force to political objectives, although both of these facets of his writing are important.<sup>7</sup> His real importance stems from the great men whom he influenced. (See figure 3.)<sup>8</sup> In the political field, V. I. Lenin was greatly influenced by this great Prussian. Even a casual reading of Lenin (if that is possible), will quickly reveal Clausewitz's influence.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, when the Bolshevik revolution

FIGURE 3

DEVELOPMENT OF GUERRILLA THOUGHT



went sour in July, 1917 and Lenin went underground he took with him only two books: Marx's The Civil War in France and Clausewitz's On War.<sup>10</sup> While Lenin's genius was the welding of the discipline of an organized political party to the guerrilla concept, which to him was in the first instance an urban uprising of the workers in Russia and in the second, the world-wide revolution of the proletariat, it was left to T. E. Lawrence--"Lawrence of Arabia"--to bring to fruition the seeds of Clausewitz's ideas on the military aspects of people's war.

Lawrence was a tormented, sensitive man, more at home in the world of archeology than in the violent role of a guerrilla leader. But both of these he was--and more. A confidant of Arab sheiks, a member of the British mission at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, an advisor to British colonial Secretary, Winston Churchill in 1921 on Arab affairs, a successful author, a Colonel at war's end and yet a private in the R.A.F. in 1935. He died tragically at age 46 in a motorcycle accident.<sup>11</sup> Fascinating man. But it is only his World War I military exploits that are of concern here.

Lawrence was an unorthodox soldier, who as an advisor to the Arab tribes fighting the Turks in the middle east, made a significant contribution to the theory of modern guerrilla warfare. Lawrence devised his guerrilla theories during ten days when he was bedridden with dysentery, festering sores and fever, resulting from a desert trek of over two hundred miles, an account of which appears in his major military work, Seven Pillars of Wisdom.<sup>12</sup> Lawrence distilled



his thoughts on warfare into three prime elements, the algebraical, the biological and the psychological.

Lawrence's algebraic concept dealt with material things such as the terrain and climate of the combat area, military technology and railways and it had a kind of mathematical certainty about it. The biological aspect, however, was more ambiguous and Lawrence was less clear in writing about it. It was concerned with war's ultimate relationship with the individual; that is, conventional battles were won by the spilling of man's blood. Lawrence sought an alternative to this blood letting. The last element in Lawrence's strategic trilogy was the psychological factor, which dealt with morale and esprit d'corps and was so important that Lawrence felt that "We had to arrange their [the Arabs] minds in order of battle just as carefully and as formally as other officers would arrange their bodies." Nor did he neglect the enemy whose mind must also be arranged. Having defined the three elements of warfare, Lawrence  
13  
now set about to relate them to the Arab situation.

In his mental estimate of the situation, Lawrence felt that the algebraic element worked against the Turk, who would need 600,000 men to defend the combat area. They had only 100,000; furthermore the Arab cause was favored by ". . . climate, railway, desert and technical weapons. . ." the biological factor also worked to favor the Arab tribes.

In Turkey things were scarce and precious, men less esteemed than equipment. Our cue was to destroy, not the Turk's army, but his minerals. The death of a Turkish bridge or rail, machine or gun . . . was more profitable to us than the death of a Turk."<sup>14</sup>

Since Lawrence believed that the Arab strength was its human element, which could not be wasted and the Turkish weakness was in material things, he conceived a guerrilla strategy that was aimed at disrupting the Turkish railway and avoiding pitched battles. His appreciation of the psychological element, which favored the Arabs who were fighting to regain their land, led Lawrence to write

A province would be won when we had taught the civilians in it to die for our ideal of freedom. The presence of the enemy was secondary.<sup>15</sup>

In the process of fighting this war, Lawrence gave expression to and later recorded, most of the guerrilla characteristics that were discussed in the previous chapter:

(1) Cause: The above quotation is an excellent illustration of the importance of the cause.

(2) Weakness of Guerrilla: The whole thrust of Lawrence's thinking was to seek a strategy that would redress the Arab's lack of numerical strength.<sup>16</sup>

(3) Need for Resolute Leader and Elite Cadre: Lawrence's first visit to Arabia was a search for such a resolute leader, whom he finally found in the person of Emir Feisal.<sup>17</sup> James Eliot Cross characterizes Lawrence as having "a small elite group which served

directly under the leaders . . . these units made up the permanent military hard core of the guerrilla force."<sup>18</sup>

(4) Sympathy of the Population: Of this aspect of guerrilla operations, Lawrence wrote that the Arab rebellion ". . . had a friendly population, of which some two in the hundred were active, and the rest quietly sympathetic to the point of not betraying the movements of the minority."<sup>19</sup>

(5) Initiative, Mobility and Intelligence: Lawrence intuitively realized the importance of these tactical elements. He outlined the need for intelligence so that the initiative could be retained and operational plans could be made under conditions approaching certainty. Further, he wrote, "The decision of what was critical would always be ours . . . Our cards were speed and time, not hitting power."<sup>20</sup> The list could go on, but the point is that Lawrence of Arabia was both a guerrilla leader and a thinker who contributed greatly to the development of guerrilla warfare in the Twentieth Century.

Now the question of who influenced Lawrence and whom he was influenced by will be briefly considered. Lawrence, although he considered himself untrained militarily, had read extensively in military history. He was familiar with the works of Saxe, Guibert, Clausewitz, Napoleon, Jomini, Moltke and Foch. He rejected Clausewitz's idea of absolute war as being irrelevant to the Arab situation. However, there is persuasive evidence that Lawrence was

familiar enough with Clausewitz's concept of people's war to use the same metaphor when describing it, as Table 2 illustrates.<sup>21</sup> It appears that Lawrence disregarded Clausewitz, Napoleon and Foch, more as an act of repulsion at the terrible casualties that were taking place on the Western Front through the misapplication of Clausewitzian principles, than as an act of intellectual disagreement. While one cannot be certain, the evidence seems to support the contention that Clausewitz's ideas on people's war had an important effect on Lawrence and his "Shiek's War."

While Stotser implies that Mao Tse-tung may have been influenced by Lawrence, there is no solid evidence to support this thesis other than the similarity of their concepts of guerrilla war.<sup>22</sup>

Despite all of this Lawrence's place in the history of warfare is secure. He obviously developed the military ideas of Clausewitz relating to people's war, just as Lenin developed the political ideas. It was left to Mao Tse-tung to combine the military and political teachings of Clausewitz into the most formidable military/political instrument in the annals of mankind.

Mao Tse-tung's genius, according to Jerome Ch' en, one of Mao's biographers, is that he took "the Chinese traditional patterns of the peasant revolt, and . . . developed a system of strategy and tactics around it. . . ."<sup>23</sup> A system of strategy that worked, not only for Mao, but for Giap and Guevara as well. Worked so well, in fact, that Revolutionary War has become the predominant form

THE NATURE OF GUERRILLA WAR

TABLE 2

Clausewitz

"According to our idea of a people's war, it should, like a kind of nebulous vapory essence, nowhere condense into a solid body; . . . However, on the other hand, it is necessary that this mist should gather at some points into denser masses and form threatening clouds from which now and again a formidable flash of lightning may burst forth."

T. E. Lawrence

". . . but suppose we [the Arabs] were (as we might be) an influence, an idea, a thing intangible, invulnerable, without front or back, drifting about like gas? . . . we might be a vapor, blowing where we listed."

of warfare in the post World War II world and so well that at least one prominent strategic thinker has joined it with Clausewitz, Mahan and Douhet as a formal theory of warfare.<sup>24</sup> Not had for a peasant from the backwaters of China.

Mao Tse-tung was born on the day after Christmas in 1893, to a stern, terrible tempered father, whom he never got on with and to a deeply religious mother.<sup>25</sup> His father was a well-to-do peasant rice trader, who insisted that Mao begin to work in the fields when Mao was just six years old. Mao split his time between the fields and school and stole every spare moment he had to read the romantic novels of feudal China, especially those dealing with revolutions, much to the annoyance of his father. By the time he was fourteen, Mao had had enough. He enrolled in the Middle School, where because of his relative poverty he was shunned by the richer students, nevertheless, Mao rose to the head of his class. In 1908, while he was at the school, reform swept China and Mao, and his schoolmate, Hsiao Chu-Chang, were swept along with the tide. It is during this period of his life, that Mao, with Hsiao, travelled extensively in the hills of Hunan, where he learned the problems of the peasant.<sup>26</sup>

By 1911, Mao together with Hsiao, became students at the Junior College at Changsha, a town, around which much of Mao's early life centers. It was a turbulent time in China--of Sun Yat-sen and his revolution. Mao joined the Army and became an enlisted aide to officers, but he detested the harsh discipline of military life, perhaps because it reminded him too much of his domineering father

and his early childhood. In any event, he left the Army in 1912 to enroll in the teacher's college at Changsha, where he remained for the next six years, studying Chinese history and philosophy and winning local renown as an accomplished essayist. It was also during this period that he read and embraced socialism. Although always happy as a student, this was also a period of uncertainty in Mao's life. Alienated from his father, he was for the most part a "professional student," who shunned most classes to spend his time devouring newspapers in the school's library. He studied the campaigns of World War I and it may be supposed that he first learned of Lawrence's guerrilla activities at this time. By 1918, Mao graduated from the school and immediately left for Peking as the leader of a group of students, who were going to sail for France as laborers. Mao left the group in Peking, having no desire to leave China.<sup>27</sup>

In Peking, Mao now 25, secured a menial job in the Peking College Library, where, because he was scorned by professor and student alike, he became withdrawn, introspective and wandered aimlessly and endlessly around the walls of the city. Not unlike another great vagrant of a few years earlier, Adolf Hitler. It was at Peking, that he met Yang Chen-ch'i and Li Ta-chao, two future leaders of the Chinese Communist Party and here also came under the influence of Professor Che'n Tu-hsiu, who advocated that the students of the new China should discard the old ways and build a new country based on science. This intellectual probably had the

greatest impact on Mao's life of anyone. For it was in the next year, 1919, that Mao, although penniless, fresh from wandering the hills of China and from visiting the Tomb of Confucius and the Great Eastern Mountain, both mystical symbols of China's ancient glory, returned to Changsha determined that he would be a politician and overthrow those in power.<sup>28</sup>

It was while Mao was in Hunan writing political articles, editing the Hsiang River Monthly Review and organizing student strikes, that a student revolt occurred in Peking, later joined by workers and peasants, which was led by Yang Chen-ch'i and Li Ta-chao, Mao's old mentors, who were now avowed Marxists. This, May Fourth Movement, had an exhilarating effect on Mao, for it was shortly after the end of the Movement that Mao became, in his words, ". . . in theory and to some extent in action, a Marxist, and from this time on I considered myself a Marxist."<sup>29</sup>

In June 1921, now more than a Marxist in theory, Mao was one of thirteen charter members present at the First Chinese Communist Party Congress held in Shanghai. Of the thirteen only three survived to help govern China in 1949.<sup>30</sup> The party was modeled along the Russian line; it was urban, worker oriented and did not pay much attention to the needs of the Chinese peasant. Mao became a provincial organizer of mine and railway workers in Hunan, whose success in these organizing activities led to his rising influence in Communist circles and curiously, in Kuomintang nationalist circles as well. One must remember that in 1923 Mao was the coordinator for the collaboration



between the Kuomintang and the Communist Parties. The Red Party had decreed that individuals could join the Nationalist Party.<sup>31</sup>

Mao continued working with Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalists until illness in the Winter of 1924-25 forced him to return home to Hunan for a rest.

While recovering from this illness Mao, in the tradition of Lawrence of Arabia, became convinced that the peasants were the key to power in China. Consequently, in the Spring of 1925, Mao began to effectively organize the peasants of the small villages in Hunan, which resulted in the richer landlords seeking help from the Government, forcing Mao to flee to Canton where he again took up his work with the Kuomintang and where he remained until 1926 when Chiang Kai-shek attempted his unsuccessful Coup d'etat.<sup>32</sup>

Chiang was more successful, however, the following Spring. On April 12, 1927, Chiang struck at the Communists in Shanghai, killing over 4,000 thereby irrevocably splitting the Nationalist and Communist United Front. Although the split did not occur immediately and they were to join in an anti-Japanese Coalition a decade later, it was never anything more than a marriage of convenience. It was also in the Spring of 1927, that Mao organized another peasant revolt in Hunan from the seeds he had sown two years earlier. His famous Report on the Peasant Movement, which defended the peasant revolt and its use of terrorism--". . . a revolution is not a dinner party, . . .", put Mao squarely in the corner of the peasants and in disfavor with the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.<sup>33</sup>

Later that same year, Mao organized another revolt, The Autumn Harvest Uprising, using as a nucleus for his revolt, the Henyang miners, who later spearheaded his army. Mao's small army was defeated due primarily to a lack of training and discipline and Mao, although captured, later made his escape with the remnants of his army to his first base area, the virtually invulnerable Chingkanshan Mountain.<sup>34</sup> Joined here by Chu Teh, Mao spent 1928, conducting guerrilla operations against government forces in the valley, organizing the local peasants and spreading the Communist word. But by January 1929, the mountain stronghold had become too crowded and food was in short supply, so Mao and Chu Teh decided to lead their followers off the mountain in the direction of the Hunan-Kiangsi border. Thus began Mao's march to power. Much lay ahead--the Five Battles of Annihilation with Chiang Kai-shek's armies, the incredible Long March, the anti-Japanese war, victory, Korea, the Sino-Soviet split and rapprochement with the United States. And through all of this Mao created a social and military revolution.

This revolution in military thought did not appear overnight like a spring flower, but went through years of pragmatic evolution. At the time of Mao's first guerrilla experience in 1927, seeking a quick victory, he relied on the masses to fight the war and not on an organized military force. While he realized that the battles must be fought in the rural areas, his objective for the first several years was the capture of the urban areas of Hunan. Compare this philosophy with his revolutionary war theories of 1937-38, arrived

at after hundreds of battles, which now featured the Red Army and not the masses as the central force in achieving victory, that contemplated a rural not urban solution and that accepted if not the desirability, at least the inevitability of a protracted war. This evolution can be traced through Mao's five major military works that spanned the years 1927-1938.<sup>35</sup>

But this evolution, fascinating though it is, is not relevant here. What is relevant, is the military thought of Mao in 1938, after his theories were fully developed. There are many sources to which one may turn to discover the nature of Mao's guerrilla doctrine, but the best is probably the pamphlet Yu Chi Chan (Guerrilla Warfare) which was written in 1937 and widely distributed in China at ten cents a copy.<sup>36</sup> Running a close second perhaps is his book Basic Tactics, which is essentially a transcript of a lecture series given in 1938 to his guerrilla leaders.<sup>37</sup> Mao's thoughts on warfare were greatly influenced by Sun Tzu's, The Art of War, even to the extent of lifting passages verbatim from this landmark work.<sup>38</sup> But as one reads an analysis of Mao's military strategy, it must never be forgotten that Mao's genius was linking military strategy with political objectives. In Mao's words:

Without a political goal, guerrilla warfare must fail, as it must if its political objectives do not coincide with the aspirations of the people and their sympathy, cooperation and assistance cannot be gained.<sup>39</sup>

And Mao's military strategy was finely tuned to the political realities that existed in 20th century China.

The political aspects of Mao's military strategy need elaboration. Like Lenin, Mao believed that the party was necessary to guide the revolution and in 1938, Mao penned his most famous passage concerning the primacy of the political party,

Every Communist must grasp the truth, 'Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.' Our principle is that the Party commands the gun, and the gun must never be allowed to command the Party.<sup>40</sup>

The interaction between the political goal and the military strategy appeared earlier in Yu Chi Chan: "Military action is a method used to attain a political goal. While military affairs and political affairs are not identical, it is impossible to isolate one from the other."<sup>41</sup> Mao also recognized the psychological aspect of political action and related it to the spiritual unification of the army, the close association of the army and the people and the undermining of the morale of the enemy. He felt that unity between the officers and men must be on the basis of "individual conscience". In his opinion, externally induced discipline based on a superior-subordinate relationship was anachronistic. Self-discipline would only be achieved when the soldier knows what he is fighting for, which is the purpose of political indoctrination. While he did not advocate complete equality of the enlisted man with the officer,

Mao was a firm believer in the beneficial effects to morale if the officer and enlisted shared equally in the "dangers and hardships of war."<sup>42</sup>

To achieve this unity between army and the people he published "three Rules and Eight Remarks for all guerrillas to follow in their dealings with the people":

Rules:

1. All actions are subject to command.
2. Do not steal from the people.
3. Be neither selfish nor unjust.

Remarks:

1. Replace the door when you leave the house.
2. Roll up the bedding on which you have slept.
3. Be courteous.
4. Be honest in your transactions.
5. Return what you borrow.
6. Replace what you break.
7. Do not bathe in the presence of women.
8. Do not without authority search the pocketbooks of those you arrest.<sup>43</sup>

This concern for the welfare of the people was based on the realization that without the people's support the guerrilla was nothing. Of course, any discussion of the relation of the people with the army would be incomplete without Mao's most famous analogy:

. . . Such a belief reveals lack of comprehension of the relationship that should exist between the people and the troops. The former may be likened to water and the latter to the fish who inhabit it. How may it be said that these two cannot exist together? . . ."<sup>44</sup>

On the subject of undermining the enemy's morale, Mao had this to say:

We further our mission of destroying the enemy by propagandizing his troops, by treating his captured soldiers with consideration, and by

caring for those of his wounded who fall into our hands. If we fail in these respects, we strengthen the solidarity of our enemy.<sup>45</sup>

The military doctrine of Mao Tse-tung, unlike his political doctrine, took a much more violent approach to weakening the enemy's solidarity. In a strategic sense Mao envisioned a protracted war that would be fought in three stages, because the guerrilla was fighting from a position of weakness.<sup>46</sup> The first state--Organization-- is devoted to the gathering of public support for the guerrilla, the development of the base area and small guerrilla actions against the enemy's weak points. Stage two--Expansion--is characterized by sabotage and terrorism and bold action by the guerrilla army to reduce the effectiveness of the enemy army, to bring in new guerrilla recruits and capture supplies from the enemy and to expand guerrilla control into contested areas. The decisive third stage is one of mobile warfare, during which the war takes on the semblance of conventional warfare and the guerrilla plays but an auxiliary role.<sup>47</sup> In this connection it is interesting to note what Mao had to say concerning the relative importance of regular troops vis-a-vis guerrilla troops:

Guerrilla operations . . . may for a certain time and temporarily become its paramount feature, particularly insofar as the enemy's rear is concerned. However, if we view the war as a whole, there can be no doubt that our regular forces are of primary importance, because it is they who are alone capable of producing the decision.<sup>48</sup>

At the tactical level, Mao states that the basic proposition is the "conservation of one's own strength; destruction of enemy strength."<sup>49</sup> According to Mao, six requirements exist that will insure the guerrilla's survival:

1. Retention of the initiative; alertness; carefully planned tactical attacks in a war of strategical defense; tactical speed in a war strategically protracted; tactical operations on exterior lines in a war conducted strategically on interior lines.
2. Conduct of operations to complement those of the regular army.
3. The establishment of bases.
4. A clear understanding of the relationship that exists between the attack and the defense.
5. The development of mobile operations.
6. Correct Command. <sup>50</sup>

To fully appreciate Mao's way of war, the following ten abridged principles of operation must be added:

1. Attack dispersed, isolate enemy forces first; attack concentrated, strong enemy forces later.
2. Take small cities first and large cities later.
3. The annihilation of the enemy's army is the chief aim, not the holding of cities or terrain.
4. In battle concentrate vastly superior forces to annihilate the enemy.
5. Be prepared and plan each battle carefully. Do not fight a battle you are not sure of winning.
6. Be courageous in battle. Allow the enemy no rest.
7. Annihilate the enemy while he is moving.

8. Seize enemy fortifications that are weakly held first. Do not attack enemy strong points until overwhelming strength can be assembled.

9. Our source of supply is the enemy army.

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10. Rest and train between battles.

These principles and requirements presented by Mao in laundry-list fashion, when coupled with his healthy regard for the value of intelligence and security, contain the essence of Mao's tactical thought. Are these theories of Mao Tse-tung valid when removed from the Chinese environment? General Vo Nguyen Giap answered that question decisively when he defeated two of the most advanced nations of the world using the strategic and tactical concepts developed by Mao Tse-tung. Certainly, no theory has had any greater test of validity.

General Vo Nguyen Giap, under the political leadership of Ho Chi Minh, adapted the doctrine of Mao Tse-tung to the situation in Vietnam, first against the French and later against the Americans winning both times. There is evidence to support the theory that Truong Chinh, a Communist party functionary, was the first to relate Mao's theories to Vietnam, but there can be no doubt that it was Giap who brilliantly applied them on the battlefield.<sup>52</sup>

Since General Giap will be prominently featured in a later chapter on the American experience in Vietnam and because his views do not significantly differ from those of Mao, suffice to say that Giap's



. . . execution of this (Mao's) strategy and his thoughts on the importance of the international situation, outside support, the proper mix of guerrilla forces and regular forces, the critical decision to move from guerrilla to mobile warfare and the promotion of a general uprising have added key elements to the art of revolutionary warfare.<sup>53</sup>

So the discussion of modern guerrilla strategy, which started with a consideration of the thoughts of Clausewitz regarding peoples' war must end in anticipation of how American military men interpreted the more conventional aspects of Clausewitzian strategy and brought it to bear against Maoist doctrine on the battlefield in Vietnam.

## CHAPTER IV

### FOOTNOTES

1. Karl Von Clausewitz, On War, Translated by O. J. Matthijs Jolles, pp. 457-462.
2. Ibid, p. 458.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid, p. 459.
5. Ibid, p. 461.
6. Ibid.
7. For a critical treatment of Clausewitz's contribution to guerrilla theory see Robert B. Asprey's, War in the Shadows, pp. 147-148.
8. LTC George R. Stotser, "Concepts of Guerrilla Warfare and Insurgent War", Studies in Military Strategy, 1973 pp. 1-19. Both figure 3 and the conceptual framework of this chapter are drawn largely from this excellent study. Figure 3 is also an adaption of a diagram presented in a lecture by COL H. Ball at the Army War College.
9. Ibid, pp. 3-5. Also see Asprey, pp. 286-317, Edward M. Collins, War, Politics, and Power, pp. 30-35. and William J. Pomeroy, Guerrilla Warfare and Marxism, pp. 73-120.
10. Collins, p. 31.
11. "T. E. Lawrence", Encyclopedia Brittanica, 1974, Vol. 10, pp. 725-727.
12. T. E. Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom, pp. 177-187.
13. Ibid, pp. 192-195. Also see Stotser, pp. 5-7 and Asprey, pp. 263-264.
14. Ibid, p. 194.
15. Ibid, p. 196.

16. Ibid, p. 189, 192 and especially p. 194.
17. Ibid, pp. 64-112.
18. James Eliot Corss, Conflict in the Shadows, p. 91.
19. Lawrence, p. 196.
20. Ibid, pp. 194-196.
21. Jolles, pp. 459-460; Lawrence, p. 192.
22. Stotser, p. 7.
23. Jerome Ch'en, Mao, p. 164.
24. J. C. Wylie, Military Strategy, p. 57.
25. Edger Snow, Red Star over China, p. 132. This book is the authority on Mao's life from early childhood until age 43. See also Stuart Schram, Mao Tse-tung, Jules Archer, Mao Tse-tung, Robert Payne, Mao Tse-tung. Other books such as Samuel Griffith's Mao Tse-tung On Guerrilla Warfare and Anne Freemantle's, Mao Tse-tung: An Anthology of His Writings have excellent short biographies in their introductions.
26. Ibid, p. 137; Payne, pp. 35-42.
27. Payne, pp. 44-52. For a different version see Freemantle, p. XXIV.
28. Snow, pp. 151-153.
29. Snow, p. 155; Schram, p. 51.
30. Payne, pp. 71-72.
31. Ibid, pp. 78-82.
32. Snow, pp. 159-160.
33. Snow, p. 161.
34. Freemantle, pp. XXX - XXXI
35. Stuart R. Schram, Mao Tse-tung, Basic Tactics, pp. 13-20. Hereafter cited Schram, Basic Tactics.

36. Griffith, p. 37. The basic documents in English which contain Mao's military works are Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Vol. I-IV, and Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-tung.

37. Schram, Basic Tactics, pp. 14-16.

38. Ibid, p. 33.

39. Griffith, p. 43.

40. Mao Tse-tung, Selected Works Vol. II, p. 224

41. Griffith, p. 89.

42. Ibid, pp. 90-91.

43. Ibid, p. 92.

44. Ibid, pp. 92-93.

45. Ibid, p. 93.

46. Mao Tse-tung, Selected Military Writings, pp. 208-213. Although this article relates to the anti-Japanese Campaign, it is applicable to Revolutionary War in general. Also see Griffith, pp. 39-40.

47. Griffith, pp. 20-22.

48. Ibid, p. 56.

49. Ibid, p. 95.

50. Ibid, p. 96.

51. Mao Tse-tung, Selected Military Writings, pp. 347-348.

52. Asprey, p. 698.

53. Stotser, p. 13.

## CHAPTER V

### CLAUSEWITZIAN STRATEGY

The military writings of Karl Von Clausewitz, particularly the classic Vom Kreige (On War), have changed the world in which we live in a way that is comparable to the teachings of Darwin, Marx and Freud.<sup>1</sup> His thoughts have influenced an impressive list of soldiers and statesmen; Marx, Molke, Schlieffen, Foch, Lenin, Mao, Hitler, Eisenhower, Truman and Kissinger to list but a few.<sup>2</sup> But as much as has been written about On War, there is suprisingly little written about "On Clausewitz", particularly in English. Happily this void has now been filled, as literary critic Christopher Lehmann-Haupt put it, with the appearance of the first general English biography of this great writer.<sup>3</sup> And to fully understand the Clausewitzian theory of war one must first understand Clausewitz, the man.

Karl Von Clausewitz, was born on 1 June 1780, to a family that, except for his father, had been engaged for generations in the religious and teaching professions. But now, Clausewitz and his three brothers chose the military as a career and all were successful at it--the four brothers eventually achieving the rank of general. Karl joined the Prussian Army in 1792 and a year later was promoted to ensign during the successful seige at Mainz during the Franco-Prussian War. With the coming of peace, Clausewitz became

bored with the precise, geometrical, rigid Fredrickian drills which were characteristic of Prussian tactics at that time. He also became aware of and concerned by his lack of formal education and he decided to do something about it.<sup>4</sup>

In 1801, Clausewitz applied for and was admitted to The Institution for the Young Officers in Berlin, where he met Gerhard Von Sharnhorst who became his lifelong friend and sponsor. While attending this two year course, Karl studied diligently ultimately graduating at the top of his class. He read the political theorists of the Enlightenment, but was most impressed by Machiavelli of whom he wrote, "Those who pretend to be revolted by his principles are nothing but dandies who take humanist airs."<sup>5</sup> With Sharnhorst's help he also became a member of a military club that was aimed at Prussian military reform. Clausewitz championed reforms that were aimed at changing from the Prussian dependence on rigid Fredrickian drill procedures to the more open and flexible formations which the French were currently using. As part of this effort he wrote his first article, which was critical of General Von Bulow's scientific laws of strategy. So early in his career, Clausewitz sensed that warfare was changing and the criticisms of 18th century dynastic warfare that is found in this first article will be advanced time and again by him throughout his lifetime.<sup>6</sup>

At about the same time, two other lifetime associations were formed. In 1803, Clausewitz became aide to Prince August of Prussia;

an association that was to cause Clausewitz much grief over the years. While at the Court, Karl met Marie Von Bruhl, whom he would eventually marry. But romance surrendered to war--Napoleon was on the move in Europe and Prussia mobilized to defend herself. The Prince and Clausewitz, who was now a captain, joined the Prince's regiment and both participated in the Prussian defeat at Auerstadt in 1806. Both Prince August and Clausewitz were captured during the retreat from Auerstadt and sent to France as prisoners of War.<sup>7</sup>

The stay in France was pleasant enough for Prince August, who became a darling of the Paris salons, but Karl had been disgusted by the Prussian strategy and tactics during the war and could see ". . . nothing in our brief campaign which was not bad and pitiable." He felt personally humiliated by Prussia's defeat at the hands of the French, a defeat that turned Clausewitz into a life-long Francophobe.<sup>8</sup> While still a prisoner, Clausewitz wrote a memorandum on suggested army reforms to his friend and advisor, Sharnhorst, who chaired a reform and reorganization committee back in Prussia. The memorandum which was indorsed by Prince August proposed the following reforms:

1. Universal conscription.
2. Admittance of the middle class to the officer corps.
3. Relaxation of the harsh Prussian code of discipline.<sup>9</sup>

Shortly after this memorandum was written, the Prince and Clausewitz were permitted to return to Prussia, but they stopped

at Coppet in Switzerland to visit the notorious Madame de Stael. The weeks that Clausewitz spent at what amounted to an anti-Napoleonic intellectual commune were, by his own admission, the most influential of his life.<sup>10</sup>

The next few years, after Clausewitz's return to Berlin, were to be the busiest and most productive of his life. In 1808, while still aide to the Prince, Clausewitz became closely connected with Sharnhorst's reform committee, where he worked as unofficial secretary to the group. It was also during this period that he formed the other important friendship of his life with August Von Gneisenau, who along with Sharnhorst, he regarded as "father figures". By 1809, Clausewitz had left his job with the Prince to work directly with Sharnhorst and had been promoted to Captain, First Class. These were turbulent times in Prussia and Clausewitz was depressed by the deplorable condition of his country, that was caused by the French occupation and by Napoleon's Continental System. When his idol, Sharnhorst was forced by Napoleon to retire, Clausewitz's hatred for the French approached paranoia.<sup>11</sup>

After Sharnhorst's departure, Clausewitz went to work on the general staff, continuing to do important work on the Prussian military reforms. He, along with his closest contemporary friend, Carl Tiedemann, were appointed to lecture at the new war school. His lectures on open tactical formations and on the integration of



irregular forces with the regular army were fundamental to the Prussian reforms. Of Clausewitz during this period Parkinson writes:

Clausewitz . . . concentrated upon explaining the revolutionary tactics which were then being introduced. His method was vigorous, exciting and compulsive. In his lectures, as in his writing, Clausewitz came far more to life than in everyday conversation . . . In these months, Clausewitz became far more like the author of On War. He was utterly sure of himself; his personal shyness and reticence fell away.<sup>12</sup>

These lectures, together with the military reforms of General Yorck who replaced Sharnhorst and the Prussian Army Regulations of 1812, of which Clausewitz was responsible for the Infantry portion, formed the complete program for which Sharnhorst, Gneisenau and Clausewitz ~~and~~ labored since 1806. The 1812 Regulations centered on flexibility, initiative, aimed fire and open formations, all of which were radical and revolutionary reforms to the Prussian Army. Finally, during all of this Clausewitz was promoted to Major and felt that he was at long last able to marry his beloved Marie.<sup>13</sup>

With the reforms well on the way to implementation and with the happiness which his marriage brought, one would suppose that Clausewitz would be a satisfied man. Such was not the case; Napoleon once again entered Clausewitz's life. Prussia was forced to join with France in an alliance against Russia. Clausewitz was appalled by this turn of events and resigned from the Prussian

Army to accept an appointment with the Russian Army to fight against the hated French. But before leaving for Russia he penned two of his more important works. The first was a three part emotional appeal, (Bekenmenisse), that denounced his king's policy of peace at any price, that exposed the political and economic disaster that befell Prussia as a result of the Continental System and that outlined how, through partisan warfare, Prussia could contribute to the French defeat by Russia. This extremely powerful, emotional and inflammatory appeal was only seen by a few trusted friends and was not published until 1869.<sup>14</sup>

The second work was a treatise on the principles of war that he prepared for his pupil, Crown Prince Frederick William.<sup>15</sup> These instructions foreshadowed his classic On War and advocated war with France, even if that war could not be won. He defined strategy as "the combination of engagements to attain the goal of the campaign or war."<sup>16</sup> He went on to write that

1. Warfare has three main objects:

(a) To conquer and destroy the armed power of the enemy;

(b) To take possession of his material and other sources of strength, and

(c) To gain public opinion.

2. To accomplish the first purpose, we should always direct our principal operation against the main body of the enemy army . . . for only after defeating these can we pursue the other two objects successfully.

To achieve the main objects of the war, he proposed four rules, which are paraphrased below:

1. Use the entire military force with the utmost energy. Any moderation will not achieve our goal.
2. Concentrate our power at the decisive point and practice economy of force elsewhere.
3. Never waste time if it can be avoided.
4. Pursue the enemy after he has been defeated.<sup>17</sup> Only pursuit yields the full fruits of victory.

Two other important concepts from this valuable book are:

1. The strategic offensive pursues the aim of the war directly, aiming straight at the destruction of the enemy's forces, while the strategic defensive seeks to reach this purpose indirectly.<sup>18</sup>
2. The conduct of war resembles the workings of an intricate machine with tremendous friction, so that combinations which are easily planned on paper can be executed only with great effort.<sup>19</sup>

These insights of Clausewitz on the nature and prosecution of war have often been published separately and have influenced military men up to modern times. A French translation of this work appeared at the end of the last century and influenced Ferdinand Foch in arriving at the principles of war he put into effect during World War I. This work has received this attention, because like Mao's Yu Chi Chan, it contains the essence of Clausewitz's thought in succinct form.<sup>20</sup>

Clausewitz, in the years 1812-1815, was called upon not to write about war, but to experience it. He participated in the

Russian withdrawal to Moscow, he fought and was decorated at Vitebsk, he was at Borodino with the First Cavalry Corps, where he charged against Napoleon's weak left flank and, afterwards as a Colonel, he was transferred to the North as chief of staff of the soon to be activated German Legion, to participate in the pursuit of the Grand Armee. Two personal tragedies now impacted upon Clausewitz in rapid succession; first his friend and fellow reformer Tiedemann died at the siege of Riga and secondly, Clausewitz was ordered to be court-martialed by his King, an action that would have a long term effect on the sensitive Clausewitz who felt himself to be a Prussian patriot.

In 1812, Clausewitz experienced the total devastation of war as both the Russian and French armies were decimated by the fighting in Russia. Clausewitz's commander inserted his small force between MacDonald's French Army and Yorck's Prussian formation, which enabled Clausewitz to contact Yorck and to be an instrumental catalytic agent in the negotiation of the Convention of Tauroggen. This important treaty was the first step toward the Prussian War of Liberation against France, eliminated Prussia as a reliable ally of Napoleon, neutralized the Prussian army and allowed Russia to cross, unopposed, into East Prussia. This treaty marked the first time that a Prussian general had broke a treaty that the King of Prussia had signed. This flagrant disregard for the King established that the Fatherland and not the King had first claim on Prussian allegiance.<sup>21</sup>

Now that Prussia had ceased to be an ally of the French, Clausewitz set to work to harness the power of the East Prussian states against France. His plan incorporated the Prussian military reforms and envisioned a levee en masse and a partisan militia Army. Although the king later extended this plan to all of Prussia, Clausewitz was still in disfavor and was refused an appointment in the Prussian Army, even though Yorck and the other "rebels" had already been rehabilitated. Clausewitz, the king said, must distinguish himself in the coming campaign before he could be forgiven. Clausewitz was depressed and bitter at this treatment from his king.<sup>22</sup>

But distinguish himself he did. His actions at the Battle of Ligny and at the Battle of Lutzen, where he was wounded while leading a cavalry charge, refutes the criticism leveled at him by the British historian Sir James Edmonds, who wrote that he ". . . seems to have been a courtier rather than a professional soldier."<sup>23</sup> The Battle of Lutzen also resulted in the death of his friend and sponsor, Scharnhorst. Hereafter Gneisenau assumes more importance in his life. This campaign and those of 1814-1815, in which the Prussian reformers were in key positions in the army, illustrated that the character of war had made the transition from the relatively bloodless battles of the 18th century to 19th century total war. These wars were the laboratory in which Clausewitz developed the theories that were published in 1832 in Von Kriege.<sup>24</sup>

The peace that followed the Battle of Waterloo reunited Clausewitz with the king and he was subsequently appointed chief of staff to Gneisenau in 1816 with the Army of the Rhine. But peace did not come to Clausewitz's personal life. He saw his army reforms come under attack by the political conservatives, who nullified the landwehr reforms and largely diluted those that dealt with the education of officers and with the appointment of members of the middle class to the officer corps. Paradoxically, Clausewitz, although a reformer, considered himself a conservative. He supported the monarchy despite the treatment he had received from it. In 1818, he was appointed Director General of the General Army School at Berlin and promoted to Major General. His duties were primarily administrative and he had little to do with the development of the curriculum, however, the appointment did allow him the time needed to add<sup>to</sup> his voluminous notes, which by now were taking book form. Unhappy in his job, by 1823 he was considering leaving the army but remained in when he was denied the ambassadorship to Great Britain, although nominated. He again joined Gneisenau in the field with the Army of Observation on the Polish border, where he contracted cholera and died nine hours later on November 16, 1831, "pushing aside his life like a heavy burden.

Parkinson's portrait of Clausewitz's life is probably best summed up by an excerpt from one of Marie Clausewitz's letters, written after the death of her husband:

Life for him (Clausewitz) was a nearly uninterrupted succession of disappointments, of suffering, of mortification, . . . he never reached the summit. And every satisfaction always had a thorn in it, to add pain to the pleasure. . . . He was too deeply feeling, too fragile, too sensitive for this imperfect world . . ."26

So ended the life of the man who has been called the "Mahdi of Mass" and the "Apostle of Violence."

Clausewitz remained a controversial figure to the end, but his theories, or more accurately interpretations of this theories, have influenced military strategy down to the present. To see that his writing has not lost any of its relevance or controversy, one need only consider that in 1967 two new editions of his premier work On War were issued and a third, which first appeared in 1962, had gone through its fourth printing by 1970.<sup>27</sup> The controversy over his work is attested to by the debate that has raged between Anatol Rapoport et al and the Neo-Clausewitzians who are ably represented by Raymond Aron, their most articulate spokesman, and among others, Henry Kissinger, Herman Kahn, and Robert Osgood.<sup>28</sup> The nature of this debate over the pertinence of Clausewitz to the nuclear era, which is largely a diplomatic-political argument, need not concern us here. What is of concern, however, is the degree to which the military aspects of Clausewitzian theory are considered valid today.

In On War, Clausewitz criticized the old 18th century method of fighting wars, because he believed that Napoleonic warfare had ushered in a new era. His ten volume work, of which the first three contain On War, is rightfully considered a classic because it was the first systematic study of war.<sup>29</sup> He used the 1806 Campaign as the basis for his consideration of the retreat, flank position and area defense; the 1812 Russian Campaign for describing marches, subsistence, resistance, retreat into the interior and defensive war, which he considered the strongest form of warfare, but not the decisive form; the Campaigns of 1813-15 for defensive war, base of operations and combined arms. Clausewitz only considered that Chapter 1 of Book 1 was in final form and in a note discovered after his death, he indicated that he would rewrite to more clearly emphasize that the political aims were the driving force of a war. "My ambition," Clausewitz wrote, "was to write a book that would not be forgotten in two or three years, . . ."<sup>30</sup> In that he was successful.

The basic point of departure for Clausewitz was the relationship of the political aim of war to the military means to achieve it.

24. War is a mere continuation of policy by other means

We see, therefore, that war is not merely a political act but a real political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, a carrying out of the same by other means . . . for the political design is the object, while war is the means, and the means can never be thought of apart from the object.<sup>31</sup>



He went on to recognize the primacy of political aim and its continual interaction with military policy

Now if we reflect that war has its origin in a political object, we see that this first motive, which called it into existence, naturally remains the first and highest consideration to be regarded in its conduct. But the political object is not on that account a despotic lawgiver; it must adapt itself to the nature of the means at its disposal . . . Policy, therefore will permeate the whole action of war and exercise a continual influence upon it, as far as the nature of the explosive forces in it allow.<sup>32</sup>

But Clausewitz also saw that both the political aim and the military means to secure it may be limited.

But this object of war in the abstract, this last means for attaining the political objective . . . namely the disarming of the enemy, by no means universally occurs in practice nor is it a necessary condition to peace . . . as war is no act of blind passion, but is dominated by the political object, therefore the value of that object determines the measure of the sacrifices by which it is to be purchased.<sup>33</sup>

Because Clausewitz's interpreters did not often perceive this distinction between absolute and real war, many sins have been unjustly laid at his doorstep.

The political aim of war, Clausewitz wrote, was to be achieved by forcing the enemy to accede to our will. <sup>34</sup> War, as we have seen, was the means to this end and in war there was only one means--the battle

The engagement is the sole effective activity in war; in the engagement the destruction of the enemy forces opposed to us is the means to the end. It is so even if the engagement does not actually take place, because at all events there lies at the root of the decision the assumption that this destruction is to be regarded as beyond doubt. It follows, therefore, that the destruction of the enemy's forces is the foundation--stone of all action in war, . . . . The decision by arms is, . . . in war, . . . what cash payment is in bill transactions. However remote these transactions may be, however seldom the settlements may take place, they must eventually be fulfilled.<sup>35</sup>

Clausewitz went on to write that:

1. The destruction of the enemy's military force is the leading principle of war, and for all positive action the main way to the object.
2. This destruction of the enemy's force is principally effected only by means of the engagement.
3. Only great and general engagements produce great results.
4. The results will be greatest when the engagements are united in one great battle.<sup>36</sup>

From these statements, Clausewitz derived the principles that the destruction of the enemy force is to be sought by great battles and that the aim of the battle was to be the destruction of the enemy force.<sup>37</sup>

He also understood that there were times when the political aim would limit the means employed:

If we attack the enemy's forces, it is a very different thing whether we intend to follow up the first blow with a succession of others, until the whole force is destroyed, or whether we mean to content ourselves with one victory in order to shatter the enemy's feeling of security, to give him a feeling of our superiority, and so to instil into him apprehensions about the future. If this is our intention, we only go so far in the destruction of his forces as is sufficient for that purpose.<sup>38</sup>

While Clausewitz believed that the defense was the stronger form of warfare, he felt that only the attack could lead to victory.<sup>39</sup>

He felt that the defensive must ultimately lead to the offense.

a swift and vigorous transition to attack--the flashing sword of vengeance--is the most brilliant point of the defensive. He who does not bear this in mind from the first . . . will never understand the superiority of the defensive.<sup>40</sup>

Two last points on the military philosophy of Clausewitz remain to be made--his thoughts on moderation in war and why real war could never coincide with absolute war. On moderation he said

Let us not hear of generals who conquer without bloodshed. If bloody slaughter is a horrible spectacle, then it should only be a reason for treating war with more respect, but not for making the sword we bear blunter and blunter by degrees from feelings of humanity, until once again someone steps in with a sword that is sharp and hews away the arms from our body.<sup>41</sup>

Clausewitz also recognized that all things in war did not go as the generals or the statesmen planned them. He called this difference between real and absolute war--friction.

Everything is very simple in war, but the simplest thing is difficult . . . Friction is the only conception which in a fairly general way corresponds to that which distinguishes real war from war on paper . . . [only] a powerful iron will overcomes this friction.<sup>42</sup>

The excerpts that have been used illustrate not only the essence of Clausewitz's military strategy, but it also reflects those of his basic tenets that became American military doctrine by way of the French and German general staffs.

Walter Goerlitz, writes that the Clausewitzian strategy of wars of annihilation dominated German military strategists from Moltke to Hitler.<sup>43</sup> It was the elder Moltke's astounding victories as Sadowa in 1866 and at Sedan in 1870 that convinced the Germans that Clausewitz was right.<sup>44</sup> The French, who were so soundly defeated during the Franco-Prussian War, turned to Clausewitz to discover the reason for their loss. Thus, through a series of lectures at the Ecole Superieure de la Guerre, in 1885, was Ferdinand Foch introduced to the idea of the supremacy of the offense, of which in World War I he was the leading advocate. During that same war, the famous Schlieffen Plan, based on the idea of a mass battle of annihilation, barely failed to end the war in 1914 and it was through the French and German influence, primarily the latter, that the thinking of Clausewitz seeped into the doctrines of the armies of the world.<sup>45</sup>

These were not pure interpretations of Clausewitz, however. The Germans deemphasized the idea that statesman should control the war machine; that is, that political notions should control the war after it has begun; or even that the military should be controlled by civilian politicians.<sup>46</sup> Emery Upton, an American general of the last century who had a tremendous influence on modern American military policy, was impressed by the Prussian army and desired that the American army be independent of civilian control.<sup>47</sup>

While this was not achieved, witness the Truman-MacArthur imbroglio, during the Korean War, the Second World War was fought almost with the absence of political direction. When General Eisenhower was being pressured by Prime Minister Churchill to capture Berlin for political reasons, Ike cabled General Marshall:

I am the first to admit that a war is waged in pursuance of political aims, and if the Combined Chiefs of Staff should decide that the Allied effort to take Berlin outweighs purely military considerations in this theater, I would cheerfully readjust my plans and my thinking so as to carry out such an operation.<sup>48</sup>

Of course, no such directive was forthcoming. Ike, in pressing this point of view, was acting in the great tradition of American military strategists.

American strategists, military or otherwise, historically had no policy for the use of force to achieve political goals. Generally speaking, American political aims were unlimited and war strategy

was directed at the destruction of the enemy army. This is especially true after the United States had amassed enough national power to properly effect this type of strategy. As Weigley writes:

But the tendency of war is to require that in order to impose one's will upon an opponent, the opponent must be disarmed . . . That is, he must be overthrown. Given this tendency . . . and given also the tendency of later American wars to be aimed candidly and from the outset at the overthrow of the enemy, the main problem of American strategists was usually that of encompassing the destruction of the enemy's armed forces.<sup>49</sup>

To see that this Clausewitzian military strategy still prevailed, one only need compare US military doctrine with some of the main articles of Clausewitzian military theory. (See Table 3)<sup>50</sup>

The Clausewitzian strategy, then, has been the dominant and pervasive military strategy of American generals and statesmen throughout most of its history. As shown in Table 3, the main elements of the Clausewitzian way of war was also imbedded in US Army doctrine at the height of the Vietnam War. Weigley put it this way:

The Indochina War brought a bitter denouement to the long search for a restoration of the use of combat in the service of policy. If the war had been conducted with a whole new kind of strategy of counterinsurrectionary war, instead of with old strategies seeking the destruction of the enemy . . . conceivably the war might have gone better for the United States.<sup>51</sup>

An examination of this "new" counterinsurgent strategy and how it relates to guerrilla warfare now becomes the focus of our attention.

TABLE 3

A COMPARISON OF CLAUSEWITZIAN AND AMERICAN MILITARY DOCTRINE

Clausewitz<sup>1</sup>

1. War is the continuance of political conflict between states with the added instrument of violence.
2. The strategy of annihilation, that is, the destruction of the enemy's armed force, should be the immediate end in war.
3. The doctrine of the necessity of the offensive in war whenever it can have a chance of success.
4. The doctrine that the simple, direct attack is best.
5. The doctrine that moral force of violent shock, rather than geometrical maneuver, is the primary means to the end.

US Army<sup>2</sup>

1. Military strategy is the art and science of using the armed forces of a nation to secure the objectives of national policy by force or the threat of force. (p. 1-2)
2. The ultimate military objective of war is the defeat of the enemy's armed forces. (p. 5-1)
3. Offensive action is necessary to achieve decisive results and to maintain freedom of action. (p. 5-1)
4. Simplicity contributes to successful operations. (This principle of simple direct attack is best illustrated by the practice of American tactics-author.) (p. 5-2)
5. The attack is characterized by fire and maneuver, combined and controlled to create a preponderance of combat power, that culminates in a powerful and violent assault in the decisive area. (p. 6-9)

<sup>1</sup> Roger Ashley Leonard, A Short Guide to Clausewitz on War, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> US Department of the Army, Field Manual 100-5, 1968.

## CHAPTER V

### FOOTNOTES

1. Karl Von Clausewitz, On War, introduction by Anatol Rapoport, p. 11, hereafter cited Rapoport. See also Squadron Leader, K.V.W. Dharan, "The Influence of Clausewitz on Military Thought," Military Review, March, 1954, p. 97.
2. Ibid, pp. 11-79 passim; Robert Ashley Leonard, A Short Guide to Clausewitz, pp. 35-37. See also Chapter IV above.
3. Roger Parkinson, Clausewitz.
4. Ibid, pp. 20-32.
5. Ibid, p. 35.
6. J. M. Gabriel, Clausewitz Revisited: A Study of His Writings and of the Debate over their Relevance to Deterrence Theory. pp. 32-39.
7. Parkinson, pp. 51-82.
8. Ibid, pp. 83-84.
9. Ibid, p. 86.
10. Ibid, pp. 89-93.
11. Ibid, pp. 97-123.
12. Ibid, p. 129.
13. Ibid, pp. 127-128.
14. Ibid, pp. 134-135.
15. Its full title was "The Most Important Principles for the Conduct of War to Complete My Course of Instruction of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince."
16. Karl Von Clausewitz, Principles of War introduced edited and translated by Hans W. Gatzke. p. 45. Hereafter cited Gatzke.
17. Gatzke, pp. 45-47.



18. Ibid, p. 58.
19. Ibid, p. 61. Emphasis added.
20. Ibid, p. 9.
21. Parkinson, pp. 162-209.
22. Ibid, pp. 210-213.
23. Robert A. Asprey, War in the Shadows p. 147.
24. Parkinson, p. 288.
25. Gatzke, p. 5; See also Parkinson pp. 290-305.
26. Parkinson, p. 331.
27. These three editions are the Rapoport and Leonard books and the Collin's book (see footnote 9 Chapter IV.)
28. Rapoport, pp. 63-76. Also see Gabriel, pp. 19-30.
29. Edward M. Collins, War, Politics, and Power, p. 59. The other seven volumes of On War dealt with the Napoleonic campaigns (Vol. IV-VIII) and various other campaigns and generalship (Vol. IX and X) Parkinson p. 333.
30. Ibid, pp. 310-319.
31. Karl Von Clausewitz On War translated by O. J. Matthijs Jolles, p. 16 Hereafter cited Jolles.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid, pp. 20-21, also see Parkinson, p. 315.
34. Ibid, p. 3.
35. Ibid, p. 27.
36. Ibid, p. 208.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid, pp. 21-22.

39. Gatzke, p. 58.
40. Jolles, p. 331.
41. Ibid, p. 210.
42. Ibid, p. 53.
43. Walter Goerlitz, History of the German General Staff, p. 62.
44. Leonard, p. 34.
45. Leonard, pp. 34-36.
46. Edward Mead Earle, Makers of Modern Strategy, p. 279.
47. Stephen E. Ambrose, Upton and the Army, p. 131.
48. Russell F. Weigley, The American Way of War, p. 353. and p. XI.
49. Ibid, pp. XIII - XIV.

50. Mr. Dallas Irvine's summary of Clausewitzian concepts has been used to represent Clausewitzian views for the sake of brevity. The concept that Irvine uses to illustrate that war should approach the absolute state without voluntary limits has been omitted. It is contrary to US military doctrine (see FM 100-5 pp. 1-6; 1-7).

51. Ibid, p. 467.

## CHAPTER VI

### COUNTERINSURGENCY THEORY AND DOCTRINE

Guerrilla warfare is a strategy of weakness. In the early stages of an insurrection, the guerrilla has little more than the clothes on his back and a cause. He has neither an army nor any of the economic, political or diplomatic advantages that accrue to a recognized government in the international state system. Because the guerrilla is not strong enough to openly challenge the target government, he is forced to take refuge in dirty, disease-ridden, remote areas where even the most ardent revolutionary must secretly long for the day that he can escape. Certainly, if he were powerful enough to achieve his objectives by other means he would do so. It is paradoxical that despite this inherent strategic weakness, guerrilla warfare has become the pathway to political power in the developing countries of the world.<sup>1</sup>

Contrasted to the guerrilla's weakness, the strength of the incumbent government seems overwhelming. The tactics of the guerrilla, however, make it difficult for the government to apply its power, for it is the guerrilla who chooses when and where to strike. The experience of Watt's, Detroit, and Washington, DC, clearly shows that it is infinitely easier to terrorize than to provide security. And the basic fact of life in an insurgency, as

Galula points out, is that it is the job of the guerrilla to spread chaos and it is the job of the government to protect its citizens.<sup>2</sup>

To be successful at its job, the government must have the support of the people. The Pacification Program is the method used to gain this decisive support.

Pacification or Revolutionary Development is the marshalling of the political, economic, psychological, sociological and military resources of the counterinsurgent and the focusing of these resources on indigenous programs that fulfill the genuine aspirations of the people. Two major elements of the pacification concept are security and commitment. The Pacification Program seeks to provide lasting security for the people in return for their lasting commitment to the government.<sup>3</sup>

But the guerrilla is also vying for the allegiance or at the very least, the neutrality of the majority of the people and he uses fear inspired by terror, intimidation, and reprisal, as well as exploiting legitimate dissatisfaction to cause the peasant to be extremely cautious and flexible in espousing political causes. After all, the peasant who must decide which side to support is committing himself and his family to a course of action that could result in death if his choice is wrong; consequently, he carefully assesses the probability of survival offered by each side. The government must not only offer a reasonable chance for success, but for survival as well. Therefore, it follows that before the government can expect to rally the people to its side it must establish security.<sup>4</sup>

That security is the sine qua non of commitment can best be seen by examining Professor A. H. Maslow's Theory of the Hierarchy of Needs.<sup>5</sup> Maslow's theory postulates an ascending structure of needs that act upon each of us and that each of us struggles throughout our life to satisfy. This concept is presented in figure 4. Two basic aspects of the theory that are of interest here are:

1. Once a need is satisfied, it no longer motivates.
2. A satisfied need is immediately replaced by the next higher need, which then becomes prepotent.

Generally, the lower more basic needs must be satisfied before the higher needs; an individual may sacrifice some lower need to maintain a higher level of development. This exception may be disregarded for our purposes, because in the underdeveloped countries, which is the environment of guerrilla war, the people are generally struggling to satisfy needs at the lower end of the spectrum.<sup>6</sup>

The most basic need in the hierarchy is the physiological need for food, clothing and shelter which must be satisfied before any of the others. Rarely does this need go unfulfilled, even in the peasant societies that are the settings for most guerrilla wars. These needs are latent rather than actual determinents of behavior; for example, the need for air to breath does not affect our daily behavior pattern unless we are deprived of it.<sup>7</sup> So even in the primitive societies the physiological needs are normally satisfied. But man is insatiable; as soon as his physiological needs are

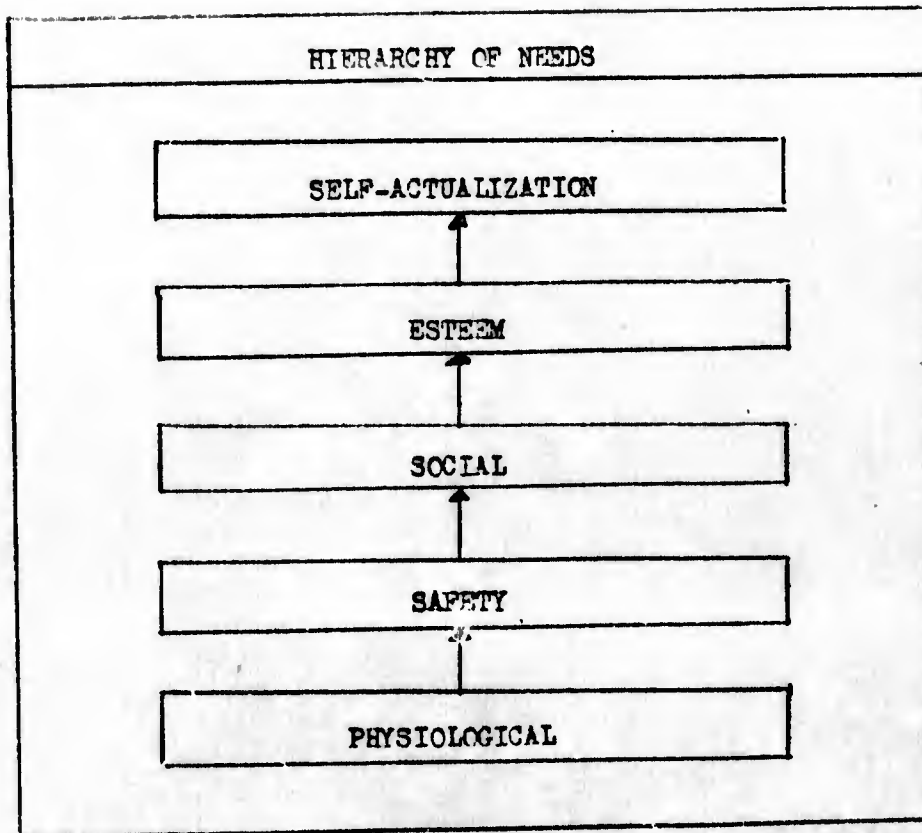


Figure 4

moderately well satisfied other needs begin to demand his attention.

Thus, after our survival needs have been satisfied, the next higher need--Safety--begins to make demands. The need for safety is the need for physical security and seeks outlet in avoidance of danger. In a guerrilla environment, the tactics of the insurgent jeopardize the very life of the individual and this threat is real enough to cause the safety need to almost exclusively dominate the individual's behavior. The preaching of abstract political ideals to a peasant who fears for his life will not be very successful, since almost everything pales into insignificance in the face of his struggle for survival. This, of course, is the reason that the guerrilla's tactics are so successful and so difficult to defeat. Only aggressive military and police operations can establish the security that will satisfy the safety needs of the people. And only after that will political goals become meaningful.<sup>8</sup>

Assuming that the safety needs of the individual have been met, the focus of motivation then shifts upward to the Social need, that is, the desire of man to be accepted by the group that he considers to be important. Acceptance by groups not meaningful to the individual will not satisfy this urge. This search for identity begins early in life when the infant identifies with his parents, continues through adolescence and culminates in adult political and religious connections, work relationships and social organizations. Central to this argument is the fact that once the

individual identifies with his chosen group (or groups), the group's goals, the group's successes and failures become the individual's goals, the individual's successes and failures. This identification causes the person to become involved and to commit himself to active participation in achieving the group's goals. It is this identification, commitment and involvement that is referred to in counter-insurgent literature as "winning the hearts and minds of the people," and is the goal of all pacification programs.

Not of immediate relevance to the counterinsurgent are the remaining needs for Esteem and Self-Actualization. The need for esteem is egocentric and of two kinds:

1. The need for self-confidence which is characterized by the necessity to achieve something or to be competent at something.

2. The need to be recognized and appreciated as an important member of one's chosen group. Summed up it is one's status or reputation. At the top of the Hierarchy of Needs is the desire for self-actualization which is the drive for self-expression and creativeness. More fundamentally, it is the realization of an individual's full capacity; it is bridging the gap between "What I am" and "What I can be". Unfortunately, man's energies are consumed pursuing the more basic drives and few persons ever attain this level, much less satisfy this need.<sup>9</sup>

The needs that are significant to the counterinsurgent are the safety and social needs. The physiological needs may play a part



in an insurgency such as the situation that existed in Biafra, or may affect some part of the population, refugees for example, but by and large it is the safety and social needs that are pertinent to the counterinsurgent. Reduced to its simplest terms, the counterinsurgent strives for the commitment and involvement of the people to his policies.<sup>10</sup> Since commitment and involvement are essentials of the social needs of the individual, and it has been shown that before an individual is motivated by his social needs he must have satisfied his safety needs, it follows that before we can hope to get the sought for commitment from the people, they must be protected from the guerrilla who threatens their safety. The basic military problem in an insurgency is to satisfy the safety needs of the people, or as Sir Robert Thompson wrote:

An insurgent movement is a war for the people. It stands to reason that government measures must be directed to restoring government authority and law and order throughout the country, so that control over the population can be regained and its support won.<sup>11</sup>

But what measures should be taken?

The type of action that would be successful in establishing security varies with the strength of the insurgent. Prior to the beginning of overt activity against the government, political concessions alone may be enough to defeat the guerrilla, especially if the incipient insurgency were truly indigenous or nationalistic (that is, free from outside influence). The incumbent government,

through peaceful political or constitutional changes, could eliminate the cause of the economic or social discontent, which ostensibly is the raison d'etre of the guerrilla movement.<sup>12</sup> This course of action has two difficult barriers to hurdle: first, the government must recognize that serious discontent exists; and secondly, it must be willing to do something about it. Counterinsurgent experience does not lead one to be optimistic on either count.<sup>13</sup>

The counterinsurgent's job becomes even more difficult if the guerrilla is allowed to grow and succeeds in establishing a base area. During this stage, the insurgent tries to gain hard-core adherents to his cause, gathers the arms, the medicines and the supplies necessary for a long struggle, engages in small combat actions against locally inferior government forces, establishes his intelligence network among the people, and gains the support of the people in the vicinity of his base area. The Castro movement in the Sierra Maestras of Cuba in 1953 is an example of the successful execution of this stage of guerrilla operations, while Che Guevara failed in Bolivia in 1967.<sup>14</sup> Aggressive military or police actions may be all that the counterinsurgent needs to win at this stage.

The guerrilla's defeat becomes a different proposition, once he has successfully established his base area and won a significant portion of the population to his side or has made them neutral. He must be defeated before the movement escalates to costly and bloody conventional warfare between the armies of the government and of the

guerrilla. To win while the guerrilla is in Phase II requires the counterinsurgent to accomplish three tasks:

- \* Isolate the guerrilla from the people
- \* Isolate the guerrilla from his base area
- \* Isolate the guerrilla from his ally<sup>15</sup>

It's apparent from the last of these three tasks that it is assumed that the insurgent has an ally assisting him. Further, it is assumed that this ally is a contiguous country. While it might be argued that a contiguous ally is not vital to the success of an insurgency, a survey of the major counter guerrilla actions of the last quarter-century reveals that only when the guerrilla did not have or was isolated from his ally was success possible for the counterinsurgent. Malaya, the Philippines and Greece (after Yugoslavia closed its borders) are cases in point.<sup>16</sup> When a guerrilla movement is supported by men and materials from a bordering ally, particularly if the ally is a developed country, the manpower requirements, both quantitatively and qualitatively, needed to beat the guerrilla are usually beyond the capabilities of the target government. Outside help will be required if the target government is to survive.

As stated previously three tasks must be performed if the guerrilla is to be defeated. These three tasks are obviously related, but the methods used to accomplish each of them vary significantly. For analytical purposes, three zones may be established that will correspond to the three goals that must be accomplished. Figure 5 illustrates this concept. Zone I is the decisive area for the

counterinsurgent. Here is where the guerrilla must be cutoff from his vital support within the population and the fact that this must be done in direct contact with the people determines the character of the military operations in this zone. In Zone II, however, the counterinsurgent has more freedom of action in the application of combat power. This zone is the area in which the guerrilla must be separated from his base area. The third task, and the one performed in Zone III, is that of isolating the guerrilla from his ally. This task may be accomplished through diplomacy, through a blockade at sea or a barrier on land, or through the direct application of combat power.<sup>17</sup>

In a given insurgency the existence of the three zones and their location will depend on the nature of the war (rural or urban) and the geography of the country under attack. More than likely, there will be many Zones' I and II scattered throughout the country. Keep in mind as the factors of military operations are discussed that the goal of each task and the ultimate goal of the counterinsurgent is to establish security, in order that a positive commitment to the government may be elicited from the people and the goal is not to kill guerrillas, per se.<sup>18</sup>

In Zone I the premier task to be performed and the one that must be carried out in direct contact with the people is the isolation of the guerrilla from the people. The guerrilla presence is the cancer that must be cut from society and the scapel must be the surgical instrument if the patient is to survive. The infantry, in this

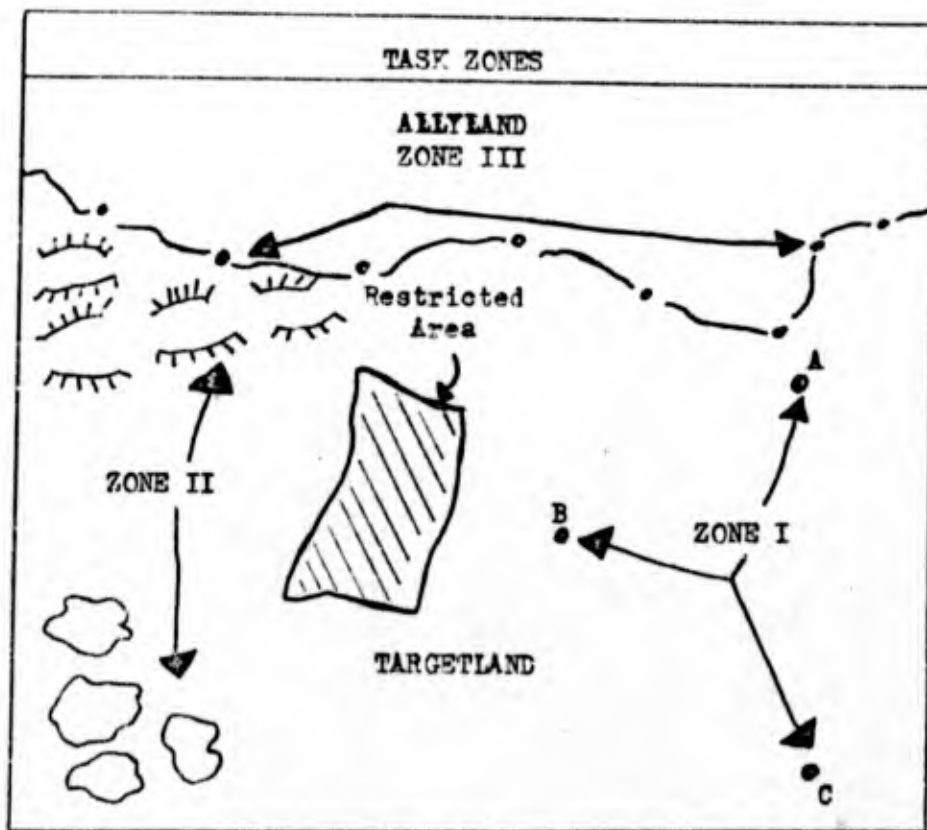


Figure 5

case, is the military scapel. In an insurgency, more than in any other type of combat, military force must be applied selectively and discriminately.<sup>19</sup> Helicopters, artillery and armor can make significant contributions to the overall infantry effort, but it is the individual soldier coming into small arms range of the enemy who is decisive and who can best apply the other combat arms. When the infantryman calls for the support of heavy combat weapons, particularly airpower, he must insist on close-in, pinpoint accuracy that will limit casualties to the people or damage to civilian homes and property. This is so, because the true objective of the counter-insurgent is not hills, cities, road junctions or even the guerrilla army, but THE PEOPLE.<sup>20</sup>

Stay-time, to borrow a term from nuclear warfare, is the length of time that a friendly force remains in continuous contact with the people and it is measured in months or perhaps even years. The purpose of a lengthy and continuous stay-time is to bolster the peoples' confidence in the government's ability to provide security.<sup>21</sup> The payoff will be in intelligence of the enemy which is the symptom of the commitment that is sought. However, to stay among the people only to become prisoners in the cities, villages and hamlets is not what is meant by stay-time. The troops must be aggressive.

Aggressiveness is the quality of the army to seek out the guerrilla, by night and by day, and to harass him at every opportunity. In short, to give the guerrilla no rest. It is only through such battle tactics

that the initiative can be wrested from the insurgent and the initiative is second only to anonymity as the guerrilla's most priceless possession. Security cannot be established without aggressive troops.<sup>22</sup> Mobility among the people is another key factor in Zone I. Mobility is defined as mingling rather than moving and it is enhanced when indigenous troops are used and diminished when foreign troops must be used, because the ability to speak to the people as individuals and to spread the government's word is paramount. Civic action projects must be accomplished while this mingling and talking is taking place. It is by coming into direct, close and intimate contact with the people that the first, faint stirrings of commitment come to our attention. And with this commitment comes intelligence.<sup>23</sup>

Intelligence pervades the entire counterinsurgent effort. The intelligence we seek in this zone is personal intelligence that will enable the police and the army to uncover the guerrilla's political infrastructure, his intelligence agents, and his sympathizers. Unless the counterinsurgents can ferret out the insurgent's political network, they cannot accomplish the mission of isolating the guerrilla from the people. As Thompson points out:

The mere killing of insurgents, without the simultaneous destruction of their infrastructure, is a waste of effort because their subversive organization will continue to spread and all<sup>24</sup> casualties will be made good by new recruits.

To claim an area pacified without stamping out the guerrilla's political infrastructure would be like walking away from a forest fire without stamping out all of the smouldering embers. It takes very little to fan another fire from these sparks. So it is with guerrilla warfare.<sup>25</sup>

The most stringent control over resources is imposed in Zone I, simply because it is here that there is the most contact with the population. If a guerrilla movement has an ally, this resource control, though important, is not vital because the ally can always resupply the insurgent and this is the reason it is so important to isolate the ally from the guerrilla. But if no contiguous or "rich" ally exists, resource control is not only important but may even be decisive as the British experience in Malaya classically points out.<sup>26</sup>

Zone II is the area in which the guerrilla must be separated from his base area. The counterinsurgent has more freedom in applying combat power in this zone, since by its very nature the base area is usually located in rugged terrain that is sparsely populated. Due to the geographic nature of the base area, consideration should be given to establishing restricted, free-fire areas, which would be publicly proclaimed and any civilians in the area would be given ample opportunity and government assistance to relocate prior to the initiation of unlimited combat. Any civilian found in these restricted areas after the previously announced deadline would be presumed to be guerrilla.<sup>27</sup> Unlike Zone I operations, combat power



in Zone II includes all of the conventional weapons at the command of the target government and its ally. Airpower should be used to saturate the known or suspected guerrilla base. Seapower, if feasible, would add its weight to that of the Air Force, while artillery would be used to intensify the fire of both air and sea. The artillery used in Zone I should be small, accurate, light caliber weapons, because of the damage limiting consideration, but in Zone II larger caliber cannon may be employed.<sup>28</sup>

Mobility in Zone II is along traditional lines. This mechanical mobility is important because rapid reaction to intelligence is necessary to attack an enemy who rarely concentrates. The use of the helicopter, in underdeveloped countries with poor road networks is indispensable as the experience in Algeria and Vietnam was proved.<sup>29</sup> Riverine operations are valuable adjuncts to the helicopter where feasible. The building of new roads and the maintenance of existing roads will not only add to vehicular mobility but it will also add to the credibility of the government. Zone II is the ideal place to use foreign troops because relatively little contact will be made with the people and the well-trained and well-armed elements of the guerrilla army normally will be encountered in and around its base area.<sup>30</sup> Intelligence in this Zone makes maximum use of electronic combat surveillance aids, since the fighting will be largely in unpopulated areas and the personal intelligence sought for in Zone I will not be available.

What is needed is sophisticated intelligence gathering devices to locate the enemy and an extensive communication system to direct the rapid reaction forces in the attack.<sup>31</sup> Although there will be few resource control activities carried on in Zone II, the object of isolating the guerrilla from his base area is in itself an act of resource control. The sum total of Zone II operations must be to isolate the guerrilla from his supply base and to bring him out into the unlimited combat areas where the full combat power of the counterinsurgent can be brought to bear.

The third task of the counterinsurgent is to isolate the guerrilla from his contiguous ally. This can be done through diplomacy, denial operations or the direct application of combat power. The success of the diplomatic approach will depend upon the existence of a quid pro quo. If none exists it will be a sterile approach. Another maneuver would be to bring pressure on the insurgent's ally through political pressure by a third country, but neither of these approaches have proved very successful in the past. The danger in the approach is that the guerrillas' might achieve their objective behind the smokescreen of negotiations.<sup>32</sup> As pessimistically as this alternative has been presented, it is preferable to the others that follow. It will require astute statesmanship to know when to abandon this approach and to pursue other more violent means.

The second way to fence off the ally is to literally do just that through denial operations. If there is a seacoast involved, a blockade might prove to be effective, although this is a ticklish

political-military operation because other nations must recognize it before it can be effective. Today it is more of a diplomatic method than it is a military one. More easily put into operation, but of less military value, is the land barrier, which to be effective must be anchored to terrain features that cannot be turned. These conditions may be difficult to find. Another drawback to this solution is the fact that the barrier must be covered by combat troops, which is an extremely inefficient use of manpower in a type of warfare that requires huge commitments of men.

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A more direct way to isolate the guerrilla from his ally is through the application of combat power that may either take the form of an attack directly on the ally's homeland or of an attack on his supply routes. <sup>34</sup> Here again sophisticated combat power may be used. Air and sea power may be used and could be supplemented by the use of Ranger or Special Force unconventional warfare tactics on the infiltration routes or even within the guerrilla ally's borders. Finally, ground assault of the ally's country may be a necessary, if drastic, solution to the third task that confronts the counterinsurgent.

Each of the three tasks must be accomplished before the guerrilla can be beaten. But security is not an end in itself. Security is established to free the peasant from fear of the guerrilla and to enable the target government to implement political, economic and social reforms that will satisfy the real needs of the people. To

impose tight security over the people without the follow-up reform programs would merely be to substitute the tyranny of the government for the tyranny of the guerrilla. The people must identify with the goals of the government, if the counterinsurgent is to gain their active involvement. Without the personal, lasting commitment of the people, the government cannot defeat the guerrilla. Security is a precondition of this commitment.

Before leaving this discussion of counterinsurgent theory, a word or two should be said about the counterinsurgent doctrine of the United States Army as it existed on the eve of the insertion of large numbers of US combat forces into the Vietnamese War. To do this, Department of the Army Field Manual, (FM-31-15), Operations Against Irregular Forces, must be examined. This field manual was still the document used in army service schools as late as 1967 to teach the Principles of Internal Defense Operations.<sup>35</sup> This manual cites that "The ultimate objective of operations against an irregular force is to eliminate the irregular force and prevent its resurgence." To do this tasks such as establishing an effective intelligence system, separating the guerrilla forces from one another, from the local population and from any sponsoring power and destroying the irregular force through offensive action, must be accomplished. It goes on to advocate pacification programs in support of the population to prevent resurgence of the irregular force.<sup>36</sup> On the tactical use of combat power the manual lists these considerations:

1. Combat operations are primarily directed against the guerrilla force.
2. Combat tactics are designed to seize the initiative and to destroy the guerrilla force. 37
3. Propaganda and Civic action are major contributing factors in defeating the guerrilla. 38

Although not politically sophisticated, it had this, and not much else to say about political factors:

When an irregular force is in its formative stage it may be eliminated by the employment of civil law enforcement measures and removal of the factors which cause the resistance movement . . . a stronger force, such as a military unit, can destroy the irregular force, but the resistance movement will, when convinced that it is militarily feasible to do so, reconstitute the irregular force unless the original causative factors are also removed or alleviated. 39

This was the extent of the official counterinsurgent doctrine with which the United States Army entered Vietnam. Nor does a quick review of the titles which appeared in Military Review, an unofficial source, reveal a burning interest by professional army men in the issue. Perhaps, this is only natural--prior to 1965, there were relatively few Americans in Vietnam and combat losses were small. But all of that was soon to change as the forces of Mao Tse-tung and Karl Von Clausewitz, would soon meet in Vietnam.

## CHAPTER VI

### FOOTNOTES

1. Robert Scheer, ed; The Diary of Che Guevara, pp. 58-79. Portions of this chapter of the paper previously appeared as an Air War College Research Report by the author.
2. David Galula, Counterinsurgency Warfare, p. 13.
3. Us Department of the Army, Field Manual 31-16, 1967, pp. 10-11. Current army jargon now terms these types of activities as internal Defense and development. Also see Robert K. Komer, "Clear hold and Rebuild," Army Magazine, May 1970.
4. Sir Robert Thompson, Defeating Communist Insurgency, pp. 111-112. Also see, Charles W. Thayer, Guerrilla, p. 23.
5. A. H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, pp. 80-106.
6. Fred R. Brown, ed. Management: Concepts and Practice, p. 47.
7. Ibid.
8. Jerry M. Silverman and Peter M. Jackson, "Terror in Insurgency Warfare," Military Review, October, 1970 pp. 61-67.
9. Brown, p. 50.
10. Thompson, p. 63.
11. Ibid, p. 51. Also see Galula, pp. 78-79.
12. Galula, pp. 63-69; See also Department of the Army Field Manual 100-20 , 1974, pp. 5-19.
13. Otto Heilbrunn, "When Counterinsurgents Cannot Win," Military Review, October, 1969.
14. Thayer, pp. 81-99.
15. Thompson, pp. 115-120; FM 100-20; pp. 5-16; 5-17.
16. Thayer, pp. 88, 100-113 and, 26-36.
17. FM 31-15, pp. 27-29 and FM 31-16, p. 20.

18. Thompson, p. 111.
19. Ibid, p. 117.
20. Galula, p. 100.
21. Thompson, p. 112.
22. Conduct of Anti-terrorist operations in Malaya, 3d ed; 1958, p. XII.
23. Thompson, pp. 113 and 115-116.
24. Ibid, p. 116.
25. Galula, pp. 123-127.
26. E. H. Adkins, The Police and Resources Control in Counterinsurgency, pp. 119-141.
27. FM 100-20 p. 5-17. Although used in the context of border areas, the concept is the same.
28. LTC William Buchanan and LTC R. A. Hyatt, "Guerrilla Vulnerabilities," Military Review, August 1968, pp. 19-39.
29. "Internal Defense operations: A Case History Algeria, 1954-62." Reference Book 31-4, 1967, p. 29.
30. For a critical view of the Zone II approach see Thompson, pp. 117-119.
31. Robert G. McClintoc, "Rolling Back the Night," Army Magazine, August 1969, pp. 28-35.
32. Fred R. Brown and Ralph Sanders, ed., Global Psychological Conflict, pp. 74-75.
33. Victor J. Corziat, "The Algerian War," Marine Corps Gazette, quoted in RB 31-4, pp. 5-17.
34. MG G. B. Simler, "Airpower in Southeast Asia," Supplement to the Air Force Policy Letter for Commanders, June, 1968, pp. 10-15.
35. The US Army Command and General Staff College lesson summary on the Principles of Internal Defense Operations clearly points this out.

36. FM 31-15, pp. 3-4.

37. Ibid, p. 25.

38. Ibid, p. 17.

39. Ibid, p. 4.



## CHAPTER VII

### VIETNAM: CLAUSEWITZ VS. MAO

In March 1965, when the first American ground combat troops landed in South Vietnam, the stage was set for the test of the Maoist doctrine of Revolutionary Warfare against the Clausewitzian way of war. In one sense, however, it was also a matter of the Clausewitzian philosophy meeting itself on two different planes. As discussed earlier, Mao Tse-tung inherited the "People's War" strategy of Clausewitz as it was politically filtered through Lenin and militarily developed by Lawrence of Arabia. Mao, of course, made significant contributions of his own.<sup>1</sup> General Vo Nguyen Giap and Truong Chinh took Mao's guerrilla doctrine and applied it to the situation in Vietnam; first against the French and later against the South Vietnamese and the Americans, adding a few purely North Vietnamese wrinkles.<sup>2</sup>

The concepts of the General Offensive and General Uprising as they relate to North Vietnam and to the Vietcong are central to an understanding of the events of the Second Vietnam War. The General Offensive is simply the Vietnamese version of Mao's Phase III, which envisions conventional warfare fought generally along the lines of a civil war.<sup>3</sup> The General Uprising, on the other hand, is strictly a Vietnamese concept, that postulates a general offensive resulting in a General Uprising of the population that would be decisive in

defeating the target Government. Thus Phase III would be relatively short, similar in nature to a Blitzkrieg.<sup>4</sup> But otherwise the leaders of the insurgency in Vietnam were scrupulous in following the tenets of Mao's type of warfare. Like Mao, and Clausewitz before him, Giap understood the primacy of the political aim.

If insurrection is said to be an art, the main content of this art is to know how to give to the struggle forms appropriate to the political situation at each stage, how to maintain the correct relation between the forms of the political struggle and those of the armed struggle in each period.<sup>5</sup>

So the insurgent side of the second Vietnam War focused on the political interpretation of Clausewitz as repeated in Maoist doctrine, as well as accepting the military strategy of Mao.<sup>6</sup> But the American interpretation of Clausewitz was somewhat different.

Starting from basically the same point as Mao Tse-tung by accepting the idea that war is the continuance of political conflict, Americans have come to a much different conclusion. While Mao constantly stressed the interaction of the political and military struggle, historically the United States has separated the military and the political struggle. Mao's philosophy, (and Giap's) might be stated "War is politics and politics is War"; while the American view is more like "There is War and there is also politics." Consequently, during periods of war, the United States has concentrated on the destruction of the enemy army before attempting to achieve the political aim of the war through negotiations.<sup>7</sup>

And while in Post WW II America there was a theoretical shift of emphasis away from total war to limited wars with limited objectives, the introduction of major combat units into Vietnam in 1965, marked the return of the war aim of the military and of the politicians to the destruction of the enemy's armed force and his will to resist.<sup>8</sup>

Prior to 1965, the war in Vietnam was fought basically along classical revolutionary warfare lines. The National Liberation Front (NLF) was established in South Vietnam in 1960 and in 1962 the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP) was created by Communist militants within the NLF to control the insurgency in South Vietnam. Although the NLF was an organization indigenous to South Vietnam, (albeit with many of its leaders trained and infiltrated from North Vietnam), the PRP had had direct ties with the Lao Dong Party (Communist) in Hanoi.<sup>9</sup> The Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN), an arm of the Lao Dong Party, exercised both political and military control<sup>10</sup> over the insurgency in the South.

It is true that the insurgency received moral and doctrinaire support from the North during the period 1954-1964, still it was largely a Southern effort. Yet, it must be recognized that the Southern insurgency would not have progressed so rapidly from Phase I in 1957 to Phase III in 1964, without the leadership of the approximately 100,000 Southern Communists who were either

underground in the South or infiltrated from the North.<sup>11</sup> During this period (1954-1964), the objective of North Vietnam and of the Vietcong was to forcefully reunify Vietnam under Communist leadership, using a Revolutionary Warfare strategy. It focused on the political objectives of the war and used diplomatic, psychological and military initiatives to enable, in John Collin's words,

. . . A ninth rate nation, in concert with a collection of motivated peasants, [to] consistently outsmart the world's pre-eminent superpower for at least fourteen years, and thereby produced a strategic classic.<sup>12</sup>

America's direct involvement in Vietnam began in 1954, when President Eisenhower sent aid directly to South Vietnam. The following year, South Vietnamese Premier, later President, Ngo Dinh Diem formally requested the United States to train the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). The American military approached this task along conventional lines; that is, they organized and trained an army that would be capable of defeating an overt invasion from the North, similar to the Korean model.<sup>13</sup> General Westmoreland cites that the objective of the United States military in Vietnam was

To assist the Government of Vietnam and its armed forces to defeat externally directed and supported Communist subversion and aggression and to attain an independent South Vietnam functioning in a secure environment.<sup>14</sup>

The political goals that this military mission was to support were stated by President Kennedy in 1961, in a letter to President Diem, in which President Kennedy emphasized that the American commitment

to South Vietnam was designed to bring peace to the country, to insure that South Vietnam retained its independence and to contain Communism. Later, another goal was added; to defeat the Communist concept of Revolutionary Warfare.<sup>15</sup>

To achieve these goals, Kennedy and his successor Lyndon B. Johnson, up until the commitment of US Ground combat units followed a policy of providing money and material aid and an ever increasing number of advisors to raise the quality of Vietnamese execution. Unfortunately, the advise that was given was frequently irrelevant to the situation in South Vietnam and usually was more appropriate to the Korean War model. Indeed, General Lyman Lemnitzer, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff 1961, reported that after a trip to Vietnam, he

. . . felt that the new administration was "oversold" on the importance of guerrilla warfare and that too much emphasis on counter-guerrilla measures would impair the ability of the South Vietnamese Army to meet a conventional assault like the attack on South Korea by the ten or more regular North Vietnamese Divisions.<sup>16</sup>

Certainly, the potential threat of a massive invasion of South Vietnam could not be ignored, but the immediate need, in a strictly military sense in the early 1960's, was for an effective police force, a counter-insurgent army and an integrated intelligence network.<sup>17</sup>

On the political side of the house, the need was for programs that would counter the NLF's political propaganda that was beginning to become successful. The need after Diem's overthrow and death in

1963 was, of course, for political stability.<sup>18</sup> Because these needs were never satisfied, the Vietcong piled success upon success and by early 1965, it became obvious that the Vietcong were on the verge of splitting the country in two and capable of winning the war in less than a year, if something were not done. In March, 1965, General Westmoreland estimated

. . . that if present trends continued 'six months from now the configuration of the . . . [South Vietnamese forces] will essentially be a series of islands of strength clustered around district and province capitals clogged with large numbers of refugees in a generally subverted countryside . . . that we are headed toward a VC takeover of the country, probably within a year.<sup>19</sup>

The American reaction to this dire circumstance was to commit US ground combat troops to the battle and for the next four years to turn the conflict into an "American War."

With the introduction of American ground combat forces on a large scale, the operative question became: How can these forces be strategically employed? One way would be to follow the counter-insurgent theories of Sir Robert Thompson and Colonel, later General, Edward Lansdale, who were occupying advisory positions in Vietnam as early as 1961. The previous chapter of this paper has outlined the major thrust of this Pacification Program. Another option available to the United States was called the "enclave strategy." First enunciated by General Taylor in 1965, it gained currency a year later when it was advocated by General Gavin in a magazine article.<sup>20</sup> Essentially, the idea was to

hold several enclaves on the coast, where sea and air power can be made fully effective . . . we are stretching these [American] resources beyond reason in our endeavors to secure the entire country of South Vietnam from the Vietcong penetration. . . . 21

Westmoreland rejected this approach in a staff study as "an inglorious, static use of US forces in overpopulated areas with little chance of direct or immediate impact on the outcome of events."<sup>22</sup>

A third method of fighting the war would be to gradually escalate the bombing of North Vietnam and of the Ho Chi Minh Trail until the leaders of the North saw that the cost of the war was more than they were willing to pay. Westmoreland put it this way

. . . the bombing campaign might convince the North Vietnamese to desist and . . . to make enough progress in the South to give the South Vietnamese the confidence and the vitality to go it alone.<sup>23</sup>

This bombing campaign would be both gradual and restrictive so as not to make Communist China and Russia edgy. This concern that China or the USSR might actively intervene in the war also precluded the invasion of North Vietnam as a viable option.<sup>24</sup> The final option that will be examined is Westmoreland's strategy, which can be summarized thusly

The enemy's shift to big-unit war was drawing ARVN troops away from the heavily populated regions, leaving the people vulnerable to subjugation by local Communist forces and political cadres. American and allied troops, along with the South Vietnamese airborne and marine battalions of the general reserve, would have to assume the role of fighting

the big units, leaving the bulk of ARVN free to protect the people. No more niceties about defensive posture and reaction. I intimated; we had to forget about enclaves and take the war to the enemy.<sup>25</sup>

These were the strategies developed to counter the Revolutionary Warfare threat in Vietnam. In the event a curious amalgam of these strategies developed, first one emphasized and then another. But the choice of which strategy to employ was not entirely an American choice to make. To get the full picture will require a "look on the other side of the hill."

On the North Vietnamese side, two factions had emerged, each advocating a particular strategy for the War in South Vietnam. The "protracted war" faction was led by Vo Nguyen Giap, while the "quick victory" party was led by Truong Chinh--both old time party comrades.<sup>26</sup> The differences between these two strategic schools were brought to a head by the American ground intervention. General Giap apparently sought to have the Vietcong shift to a more defensive strategy, putting his money on a protracted war. The "quick victory" school, however, pushed for continued offensive operations against both ARVN and US troops, with the ultimate aim being the General Offensive which would culminate in the General Uprising. The issue was initially resolved in favor of the offensive which was advocated by the commander of Vietcong forces in the South, General Nguyen Chi Thanh, a North Vietnamese officer.<sup>27</sup> So the opposing sides in Vietnam in 1965 were both intent on offensive action.



General Westmoreland's concept of implementing his offensive strategy envisioned three phases:

Phase one: Commit those American and Allied forces necessary 'to halt the losing trend' by the end of 1965.

Phase two: 'During the first half of 1966' take the offensive with American and allied forces in 'high priority areas' to destroy enemy forces and reinstitute pacification programs.

Phase three: If the enemy persisted, he might be defeated and his forces and base areas destroyed during a period of one year to a year and a half following Phase II.<sup>28</sup>

While General Westmoreland did not follow the classic "oil spot" counterinsurgent doctrine, he did approach it by establishing a priority area in each corps tactical zone with the idea of eventually effectuating a link up of these zones.<sup>29</sup> General Westmoreland, however, never accorded these pacification efforts more than secondary importance, since he was after the "bully boys"--the main forces or big units--who he felt were the main threat to winning the war. He also saw the danger to his strategy.

. . . the very existence of large enemy units made it essential that American troops be prepared on short notice to drop what they were doing and move against a developing big-unit threat. When the troops moved away from the population, the guerrillas obviously gained a chance to recoup their losses, but I never had the luxury of enough troops to maintain [a] . . . presence everywhere all the time.<sup>30</sup>

Criticism of Westmoreland's strategy centered around this big-unit concept and around his "search and destroy" tactics. John Collin's asserts that American counterinsurgency efforts went "bankrupt" in 1965 with appearance of American troops. He goes on to state that

'Americanization' would have been acceptable as a stop gap, but in the long run, it was a strategic disaster. The 'military war' assumed and retained top priority; our ally's armed forces were cavalierly shunted aside; corollary political and economic programs received little encouragement, and predictably, the populace suffered. Probably no other policy could have prevented our success as surely as did Americanization.<sup>31</sup>

Other critics attack Westmoreland's "search and destroy" techniques. These critics hold that in Revolutionary Warfare, pacification is the key to success and pacification demands clear and hold tactics. That is, after an area is cleared of Vietcong military units, the next task is to provide the population security, while at the same time rooting out the Vietcong infrastructure. They point out that the peasant is the real target, not the big-units.<sup>32</sup> Sir Robert Thompson felt that "search and destroy" tactics resulted in the ineffective dispersal of US forces all over the unpopulated areas of South Vietnam.<sup>33</sup> But despite this criticism, Westmoreland's strategy had prevented the collapse or the splitting of South Vietnam in two in 1965; throughout 1966 the enemy main force units had been dealt bloody losses; and the beginning of 1967 saw Corps size attacks on the Communist war zones northwest of Saigon.<sup>34</sup> But now it was Giap's turn.

Prior to the 1966-67 dry season, a debate of Vietcong strategy again occurred. Again General Thanh and General Giap were on opposite sides of the issue, but this time General Giap's views prevailed. General Thanh sought the deployment of North Vietnamese main force divisions throughout South Vietnam, while General Giap advocated the massing of divisions in a single strategic area just south of the 17th parallel. Giap's plan would "spoil" the American strategy by forcing Westmoreland to shift troops from other parts of SVN, to defer pacification in the I Corps area and to delay deployment of large US units in the area South of Saigon.<sup>35</sup>

This, of course is just what happened. General Walt writes that he was required to slow his pacification effort, which many experts believe was the best in Vietnam, and "forced to commit men into the largely barren north."<sup>36</sup> Four US brigades were also shuttled into I Corps, later designated as the Americal Division. This diversion of Giap's forced Westmoreland to take troops from his priority areas and to place them in a largely static role at a place of Giap's choosing. Giap chose the Northern provinces and the Central Highlands as battlefields because American troops would be taken off pacification duties, the one program that threatened to destroy the critical factor in the southern insurgency--the VC infrastructure.<sup>37</sup> So while 1967 saw many North Vietnamese and Vietcong soldiers killed, it was also the year in which the initiative

once again passed to the guerrilla. And just over the horizon was the decisive TET offensive of 1968, an event that was destined to change the course of the war in ways that neither Giap nor Westmoreland could foresee.

The 1968 TET offensive has correctly been called one of the decisive battles of the twentieth century. <sup>39</sup> It was a military victory for the United States; it was the "Pearl Harbor" of South Vietnam that finally united its people, it was a political victory for the allies because it decimated the Vietcong infrastructure-- it was all of this and more. But most of all it was the greatest psychological defeat in the history of the United States. The attack was not entirely unexpected; General Westmoreland had been receiving reports of a Communist buildup for an offensive for several months. What was unexpected was the timing of the offensive, which began during the TET holiday period, only the second time in its history that a Vietnamese general violated the holiday. Equally surprising was the scope and the ferocity of the attack. The Vietcong struck against Saigon, against thirty-six provincial capitals, against ~~five of the six free cities~~, against <sup>40</sup> sixty four district towns and over fifty hamlets. Most of these attacks were repulsed in just a few days at heavy cost to the Vietcong, the exceptions being Saigon and Hue.

General Westmoreland estimates that the Communists lost 40,000 either killed or captured, compared to allied losses of

about 3,100 killed. Even COSVN, after enumerating the successes of the offensive, admitted to the following shortcomings:

1. In the military field . . . we have not been able to destroy much of the enemy's live force . . . and have not created favorable conditions for motivating the masses to arise in towns and cities.

. . .

3. The puppet--troop--proselyting failed to precipitate a military revolt in which the [enemy] troops arose and returned to the peoples side.<sup>41</sup>

and elsewhere

. . . we failed to seize a number of primary objectives and to completely destroy mobile and defensive units of the enemy. We also failed to hold the occupied areas. In the political field we failed to motivate the people to stage uprisings and break the enemy's oppressive control.<sup>42</sup>

So in the Communists own words, the attack did not achieve all of the intended objectives. But just what were Giap's intentions?

To answer this question, one must turn to the Summer of 1967 to Hanoi. The first event that impacts on the planning of the offensive is the death of Nguyen Chi Thanh to wounds that he received as a result of a B-52 raid in the border jungles of South Vietnam. He had been, as noted earlier, Hanoi's senior general in the South--the Red military counterpart of General Westmoreland. General Thanh had been the leading advocate of the big-unit war from the perspective of the North Vietnamese. Recall that earlier he was opposed to Giap's concentration of regular divisions south

of the DMZ and, in fact, had proposed that the regular units be dispersed throughout all of South Vietnam. But by early 1967, Thanh seems to have changed his mind, possibly as a result of the success of the US forces in attacking War Zones C and D in the Fall of 1966, and he now favored orchestrating large unit activities with those of the local guerrilla units. He had openly chided General Giap a year earlier for his insistence on the strategy of protracted guerrilla warfare, but now had apparently drifted closer to Giap's ideas. It is one of the more interesting "what ifs" of history to speculate what effect General Thanh would have had on the nature of the Tet Offensive had he lived.

43

But he did not live and as the North Vietnamese diplomats from around the world arrived in Hanoi in the early Summer of 1967 to decide the strategy for the coming year, General Thanh was silent. General Giap had made his views on waging a protracted war against the Americans public in September 1967, presumably after the decision to launch the Tet Offensive had been taken. His thesis is that a stalemate could win the war for the North, because the United States could not afford to be bogged down in Vietnam indefinitely. In this treatise, Big Victory, Great Task, Giap again emphasizes the importance of the guerrilla units and is contemptuous of Westmoreland's search and destroy tactics. He outlines his top two military priorities; inflicting heavy casualties on American and allied units and attacking their base areas. He saw the

importance of both the coordinated and independent concepts of operation. The coordinated method, which uses main force infantry, artillery and sabotage units, would be used to attack the enemy when the opportunity of causing heavy casualties presented itself. Guerrilla units would be used as auxiliaries to the main force. The independent method would be used to strike allied base areas and strong points. It was characterized by crack commando units that would use rockets and mortars to inflict heavy enemy casualties in base area's while sustaining few guerrilla loses.<sup>44</sup>

At first blush the concepts just described would not seem to be in harmony with the General Uprising and General Offensive doctrine that was the rationale for TET. Indeed there is evidence to support the notion that Giap implemented the TET offensive reluctantly.<sup>45</sup> In any event, Giap appears to have been responsible for planning and executing Hanoi's decision to launch the TET offensive. Giap sought a way to achieve his two top military objectives, at the same time that he achieved the twin political goals of toppling the Saigon government and dealing a fatal blow to the pacification program, which by May, 1967 had been placed under the authority of General Westmoreland. For the first time in the War, the big unit war and the "other" war were integrated. General Giap had always been concerned, even nervous, about the pacification effort, so this organizational change must have jolted him.

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Giap, in early 1967, noted the US reaction to the divisional probe around Con Thieu in northern I Corps. He saw the pullout of the marines in force and their switch Northwards and the consequent detrimental effect that this had on pacification. In October of 1967, similar operations at Dak To and Loc Ninh in the II Corps Central Highlands area achieved similar results. As TET drew near, Giap shifted his operations to the DMZ at Khe Sanh and perhaps, provided fuel to the rumor that this was to be another Dien Bien Phu by allowing himself to be seen in the area. Westmoreland reacted predictably and the Tet Offensive was launched, with the results previously stated.<sup>46</sup>

Khe Sanh and the Central Highlands operations furthered the attainment of Giap's two military objectives through coordinated unit tactics and the independent guerrilla attacks on the cities and towns furthered his political objectives. The timing of the Peace Talks in May, 1968, lends support to the idea that Tet may have been a political move to put North Vietnam in a favorable negotiating position. Whatever their intentions, and the evidence is inconclusive, the results were astounding. From the North Vietnamese perspective, the attack was costly to the Vietcong, especially to the degree that their infrastructure was destroyed. The VC infrastructure and guerrilla never again played an important role in the South.<sup>47</sup> General Walt, characterized the battle as the "Pearl Harbor of South Vietnam: it solidified and strengthened



the people and brought them closer to their own government and armed forces than ever before." ARVN morale soared.<sup>48</sup> In effect it was a military defeat of gigantic proportions.

But what was lost on the battlefield in Vietnam was recouped tenfold half a world away in the United States. And here the media must accept part of the responsibility for turning a military victory into a political defeat--but not sole responsibility. David Halberstam characterizes the effect of Tet this way:

For the first time they [VC] fought in the cities, which meant that day after day American newspapermen, and more importantly, television cameramen, could reflect their ability, above all their failure to collapse . . .<sup>49</sup>

Certainly, Tet destroyed the credibility of President Johnson's administration. But why? For one thing, the Press and TV were advocating a point of view in opposition to the Vietnam War, that the American public was ready to accept because it was never really prepared for the war and because the media found a dissident intellectual element that was fully prepared to exploit any unfavorable news about the war.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, in the final analysis the government must take the blame for never really leveling with the American people.

Of equal importance to the perception of the American people of a battlefield disaster was the March 31 speech of President Johnson, wherein he declared himself a "non-candidate" for re-election. The

announcement that General Westmoreland would become Chief of Staff of the Army, an action many observers equated to being "kicked upstairs," the announcement that McNamara would be replaced as Secretary of Defense that Spring--all of these actions tended to cause the American public to view Tet as an American disaster. But the most critical--critical to the point of being a blunder--was the request by Westmoreland, for whatever reasons, for an additional 205,000 American soldiers. Had these events not occurred, particularly not the last, the war in Vietnam might have taken a more favorable turn after Tet.

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Events after the Tet offensive moved rapidly. Nixon was elected President of the United States by a slim margin, and was dedicated to the withdrawal of US troops from South Vietnam. Negotiations were begun and General Abrams was put in command in Vietnam. During 1969, the VC switched to a strategy of small unit actions generally in accordance with General Giap's independent tactics; likewise, General Abrams turned to small unit tactics also. There were exceptions, however. The VC launched three offensives during the year, generally in the area near Saigon, in the DMZ and in the Central Highlands. The major actions in 1970 and 1971 were the "incursions" into Laos and Cambodia. By 1971, there was a sharp reduction in US casualties and by the end of 1973 a ceasefire had been established.

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But by now both Pacification and Vietnamization had taken root. General Westmoreland gave these policies a push in 1967 when he named Ambassador Komer as his Deputy for Pacification and by giving his military deputy, General Abrams, responsibility for what later came to be called Vietnamization.<sup>53</sup> The improvement was dramatic. By 1969, Sir Robert Thompson reported that he ". . . was able to visit areas and to walk through villages which had been under Vietcong control for years."<sup>54</sup> The up-grading of ARVN was also moving apace,<sup>55</sup> paving the way for Vietnamization and US disengagement. So finally after over a decade of trying the United States had stumbled on the key to victory in Vietnam. Sir Robert Thompson's thoughts are significant in this regard.

It was never understood [before 1969] that nation building was the offensive constructive programme designed to strengthen the government's assets and eliminate its weakness, while the military operations were defensive and destructive designed to hold the ring . . . and, in so doing, to weaken the enemy's military assets. The programme which linked these two together was pacification . . . the three programmes were tackled and regarded in precisely the reverse order of importance in relation to the objective and, in turn, the strategy.<sup>56</sup>

So by 1969, the US was on the right track and by 1971 it looked as if the North Vietnamese could not win.<sup>57</sup>

But the North Vietnamese were not to give in so easily. Hanoi reversed its war strategy and decided to launch an armor invasion of South Vietnam across the DMZ. The attack met with initial success

but was eventually halted. ARVN, in conjunction with US air power, counter-attacked and by the Fall of 1972, with Haiphong Harbor mined, the VC were stopped on the battlefield. Vietnamization had proved to be effective.<sup>58</sup> This was Hanoi's darkest hour. Once again, however, a battlefield loss was turned into a diplomatic success--the cease fire was signed in January 1973.<sup>59</sup>

In true Communist style, the North Vietnamese began a logistic build-up under cover of the ceasefire. During the summer of 1974, the VC attacked, and while enjoying some limited success, by January 1975, the ARVN had regained all of the territory it had lost. Even while US aid was being severely curtailed in 1974, ARVN was repulsing divisional and Corps level attacks. By 1975, Hanoi was ready to mount another large scale conventional invasion of the South. The capture of Song Be in January, 1975 was a test of US resolve and when the US did nothing the stage was set for the collapse of the Saigon government. Without US aid or airpower, the ARVN lost its will to fight and the shameful result, more than adequately covered by the US media, is familiar to us all.

## CHAPTER VII

### FOOTNOTES

1. Chapter IV, this paper.
2. For a discussion of Truong Chinh's contributions to North Vietnam's philosophy of War see Truong Chinh, Primer for Revolt.
3. LTC George R. Stotser, "Concepts of Guerrilla Warfare and Insurgent War," Studies in Military Strategy, 1973, p. 9.
4. Don Oberdorfer, Tet!, pp. 46-54.
5. Vo Nguyen Giap, People's War People's Army, p. 76.
6. See Chapter V.
7. Russell F. Weigley, The American Way of War, p. 475.
8. Weigley, pp. 409-424 and pp. 464-5.
9. Robert B. Asprey, War in the Shadows, pp. 995-6.
10. William C. Westmoreland, A Soldier Reports, p. 66.
11. Edgar O'Ballance, The Wars in Vietnam, pp. 12-13 and pp. 36-38.
12. John M. Collins, Grand Strategy, p. 255.
13. Westmoreland, pp. 69-70. Also Asprey, pp. 844-5. Westmoreland supports this approach, while Asprey is critical of it.
14. Ibid, p. 69.
15. Asprey, p. 991 and Collins, pp. 240-243.
16. Ibid, p. 986.
17. Collins, p. 245.
18. Sir Robert Thompson, Revolutionary War in World Strategy, pp. 112-130.

19. Westmoreland, p. 147.
20. Westmoreland, pp. 155-6 and Asprey 1116-1168.
21. Asprey, p. 1167.
22. Westmoreland, p. 155-156.
23. Ibid, p. 154.
24. Asprey, p. 1168.
25. Westmoreland, p. 169.
26. O'Ballance, pp. 11-16.
27. Patrick J. McGarvey, Visions of Victory, pp. 7-23.
28. Westmoreland p. 151.
29. Ibid, 98-102, See also Thompson, p. 151.
30. Ibid, p. 177.
31. Collins, p. 245.
32. Asprey, p. 1137. This critique is typical of the critics of the search and destroy tactic.
33. Thompson, p. 142.
34. O'Ballance, pp. 87-106.
35. McGarvey, p. 42.
36. General Lewis W. Walt, Strange War, Strange Strategy, pp. 140-141.
37. McGarvey, p. 43.
38. O'Ballance p. 102-118.
39. Noble Frankland and Christopher Dawling, Decisive Battles of the Twentieth Century, p. 321.
40. Ibid, p. 322.

41. McGarvey, pp. 259-60.
42. Ibid, p. 253.
43. Ibid, pp. 7-23. Also see Oberdorfer, pp. 42-44.
44. Ibid, pp. 40-46 and pp. 199-251.
45. Personal Interview, LTC H. Lundy, 8 Apr 76. LTC Lundy was the Chief US negotiator for the Four Party Joint Negotiating Team that was concerned with American personnel missing in action. In September, 1973, in a discussion with his North Vietnamese counterpart he was told that Giap followed North Vietnamese Premier LeDuan, who was an advocate of both 1968 and 1972 offensives. Giap, according to LTC Lundy's source was not enthusiastic over either of these actions.
46. McGarvey, pp. 47-55.
47. Oberdorfer, pp. 329-30.
48. Walt, p. 170.
49. David Halberstrom, The Best and the Brightest, p. 787.
50. Oberdorfer, pp. 331-35.
51. Frankland and Dowling, pp. 323-333.
52. O'Ballance, pp. 141-177.
53. Westmoreland, pp. 260-63 and pp. 269-271.
54. Sir Robert Thompson, No Exit from Vietnam, p. 209.
55. O'Ballance, pp. 138-140 and Collins, pp. 246-247.
56. Sir Robert Thompson, quoted in Collins, p. 249.
57. Collins, p. 255, also see Thompson, No Exit from Vietnam, pp. 216-17.
58. Ibid, 255-56.
59. Collins, pp. 256-57.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSIONS

This paper began by asking the question: Did the application of the Clausewitzian philosophy of war by the United States during the Vietnam War to combat a Maoist guerrilla war contribute to the American defeat? The answer, for several reasons, must be a resounding no! In the first place, the strategy that the Americans followed, especially during 1965-1968, certainly had some Clausewitzian elements, but it was not pure Clausewitz by a long shot. General Westmoreland did concentrate on the destruction of the enemy force and the air war over North Vietnam was aimed at the will of the enemy, but neither was pursued militarily in the way that Clausewitz would have intended. The graduated, piecemeal approach was neither successful on the ground in the South or in the air in the North. More importantly, the American military strategists ignored Clausewitz in not examining what kind of war they were prepared to fight.

Now the first, the greatest and the most decisive act of judgment which a statesman and commander performs is that of correctly recognizing in this respect the kind of war he is undertaking, of not taking it for, or wishing to make it, something which by the nature of the circumstances it cannot be. This is, therefore, the first and most comprehensive of all strategic questions.

In effect, the military did what it knew how to do best--fight a conventional war. So Clausewitzian doctrine cannot be faulted on the military level.



On the political level Clausewitz is equally blameless, because the American military strategy never supported the political objective. The political objective, in the first instance sought to attain an independent and secure South Vietnam. After the introduction of large American ground combat units, this relatively simple and straightforward political objective became obscured. Early on the defeat or containment of Communism became a driving goal, perhaps it was the real goal in the first place and self-determination for South Vietnam was simply the rationale. Later American prestige and resolve became major goals often overshadowing or even replacing the other goals. Finally the defeat of the Revolutionary Warfare Concept also became important. Perhaps these were all valid goals, but the point is many of these goals were developed after the decision to intervene was made. Perhaps the policymakers lost sight of their goal, because it is clear that the "friction of war" was more evident in the political aspect of Vietnam than in the military aspect.

Thirdly, in the field of Command and Control in its broadest sense, the American policymakers and strategists turned their backs on both common sense and Clausewitz

. . . war is to be regarded as an organic whole, from which the single members cannot be separated, in which therefore every individual activity flows into the whole. . . .

During the Vietnam conflict, General Westmoreland controlled the ground war in South Vietnam; Pacification, until 1967, was the responsibility of the American ambassador; the naval war was fought by the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific and the air war over Hanoi was planned from Washington, DC. There never was any combined command of US, allied and Republic of South Vietnam forces, instead there was cooperation, which is a difficult way to run any war and a particularly bad way to run a counterinsurgency.

Then there is the Clausewitzian idea of the center of gravity. The concept is to identify the enemy's decisive point--his center of gravity--and to attack that point as a first priority and to relegate other matters into secondary roles. As Sir Robert Thompson pointed out, the center of gravity of the Vietnam war was the commitment of the people of South Vietnam to their government. A pre-condition for that support was the security of the people and the Pacification Program was the means to accomplish both the security and the commitment. However, General Westmoreland's strategy was designed to defeat the North Vietnamese army. This is not to say that operations against main force units and infiltration routes were not important or necessary. They were, but not as an item of first priority.

After reviewing both the Clausewitzian and the Maoist doctrine as they evolved on the battlefield in Vietnam, one cannot but conclude that Clausewitz is relevant to defeating Maoist Revolutionary

Wars. One might even go as far as to say that they are different sides of the same coin. But Clausewitz is elusive--his philosophy can (and has) been invoked to argue almost any strategic point of view--the trick is to apply the appropriate and valid parts of Clausewitz to the strategic situation. Those enumerated above--deciding what kind of war you must fight; linking the military strategy to the political aim; more importantly deciding what the political aim is before going to war, recognize and attack the proper center of gravity; insure that the war is conducted as a unity--are especially relevant to the Vietnam counterinsurgent effort. So there is utility to using the Clausewitzian approach to fight Maoist wars.

Finally, the war in Vietnam was not lost because the American military was restricted or limited from fighting the war its way. Had all the shackles been removed, one can only expect that General Westmoreland would only have pursued his big unit war more assiduously; the air war might have tried to "bomb Hanoi back into the stone age"; perhaps tactical nuclear weapons would have been used, as they were studied. But all of this was aimed at the wrong center of gravity. The key to victory was in the hands of the military strategist from 1954 onward; he had but to use it. Had the Pacification and Vietnamization policy been followed from the beginning the nature and the result of the war would have been completely different. The war would have entailed less blood and

treasure and would not have divided the country as it finally did. The irony of the situation is that it took fourteen years of effort, and a colossal military blunder by General Giap, which serendipitously turned into first an American psychological defeat and then into a political one, to discover a strategy that had been present from the start. Had the military strategists chosen this less "glorious" pacification strategy at the outset there would not be any talk today of a military victory and a political defeat in Vietnam. To talk of a military victory and political defeat is not only a contradiction in terms, but is to miss the whole point of the painful experience as well.

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