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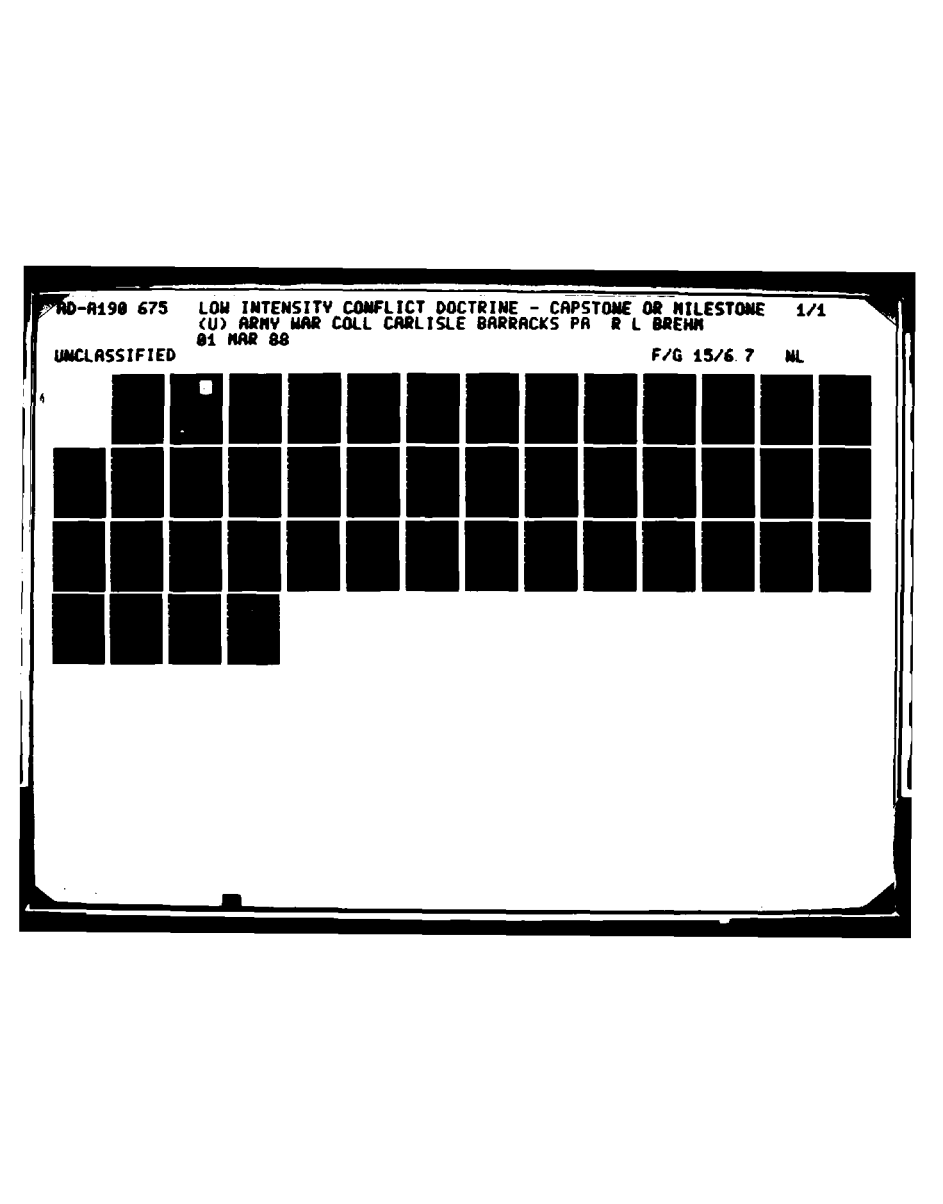

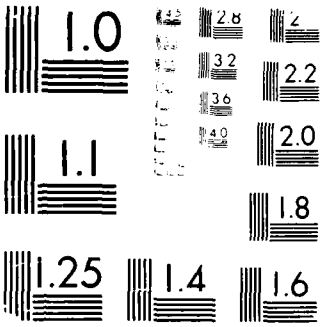

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STUDY PROJECT

LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT DOCTRINE - CAPSTONE OR MILESTONE?

BY

Lieutenant Colonel Robert L. Brehm

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In the post-Vietnam era, Army planners and doctrine developers were almost exclusively involved in actions taken to correct actual or perceived shortcomings in our ability to counter Soviet threats to NATO objectives. For several years, the primary thrust of Army training and force modernization was the AirLand Battle in Western Europe. At the same time, and with increasing frequency, the United States was also facing threats to its national interests in the form of insurgency warfare and terrorist activities. As a result, the subject of low intensity conflict has received renewed emphasis. Army doctrine for low intensity conflict is contained in Field Circular 100-20. The purpose of this study is to examine current Army doctrine on low intensity conflict. The assessment will include a review of definitions, nature of an insurgency, U.S. response to insurgencies, and training requirements to determine if FC 100-20 is a useful guide for infantry commanders.

USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT DOCTRINE - CAPSTONE OR MILESTONE?

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

LTC Robert L. Brehm

U.S. Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
30 March 1988

ABSTRACT

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In the post-Vietnam era, Army planners and doctrine developers were almost exclusively involved in actions taken to correct actual or perceived shortcomings in our ability to counter Soviet threats to NATO objectives. For several years, the primary thrust of Army training and force modernization was the AirLand Battle in Western Europe. At the same time, and with increasing frequency, the United States was also facing threats to its national interests in the form of insurgency warfare and terrorist activities. As a result, the subject of low intensity conflict has received renewed emphasis. Army doctrine for low intensity conflict is contained in Field Circular 100-20. The purpose of this study is to examine current Army doctrine on low intensity conflict. The assessment will include a review of definitions, nature of an insurgency, U.S. response to insurgencies, and training requirements to determine if FC 100-20 is a useful guide for infantry commanders.

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LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT - CAPSTONE OR MILESTONE?

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Anyone who has been following Army professional journals for the past several years is aware that the subject of low intensity conflict is receiving renewed emphasis and attention. Recent issues of Military Review, Parameters, and Infantry, to name a few, have all devoted space to articles on doctrine, principles, and policy. Additionally, students attending Army schools will find revised curricula which include increased readings, practical exercises, and discussions covering all aspects of missions which fall under the umbrella of low intensity conflict.

This renewed emphasis on low intensity conflict follows more than a decade of preoccupation by Army planners and strategists with the challenges in Western Europe and the Persian Gulf. Throughout this period, the major focus of the Army has been on the development of doctrine and equipment which would enable the Army to execute its NATO missions. Much effort has gone into the development and revision of the Army's AirLand Battle doctrine which, although touted as a doctrine with worldwide applicability, is designed primarily to defeat the Warsaw Pact in Western Europe. Many of the Army's modernization programs are linked directly to AirLand Battle doctrine and have a similar Western Europe focus.

Moreover, following the end of its involvement in Vietnam, the Army significantly reduced the capabilities of its Special Forces while reorienting on conventional forces and conventional warfare.

The events of the past several years, however, have clearly demonstrated that we cannot continue to be concerned only with the "big war" in the conventional arena. Wars of national liberation supported by the Soviet Union continue unabated. Issues in the Third World have an increasing impact on the United States and its global interests. The use of international terrorism as a political weapon continues to frustrate the major powers. Continued unrest close to our own borders in Central America serves as a reminder of the potential threat associated with low intensity conflict. It is unlikely that such challenges to our national interests will disappear since, for our adversaries, ". . . low intensity warfare, be it terrorism, insurgency, or subversion, represents a cost-effective means of aggression for advancing their interests, while minimizing the prospect of forceful response by the United States and our allies."[1]

Our national security strategy is based on deterrence, and that strategy has been effective in preventing nuclear war or a major conventional war. According to a former Secretary of Defense,

> We must concern ourselves not only with deterring ambiguous aggression, but with actively combatting it, for it is going on all around us. To some extent, it is the product of our success in preventing

> wars at higher levels of intensity that has forced our adversaries to pursue these wars in the shadows.[2]

The Army has published several manuals which provide current doctrine and thinking about low intensity conflict. The purpose of this paper is to examine one of those publications, Field Circular (FC) 100-20: Low Intensity Conflict, in an attempt to answer the question: Does FC 100-20 provide a useful basis for infantry commanders to train their soldiers and units for low intensity conflict? This assessment will include a definition of terms associated with low intensity conflict, examine the nature of insurgent warfare, look at U.S. responses and measures to defeat insurgencies, and provide an appraisal of training issues. For the purpose of the assessment, this paper will examine these issues from the viewpoint of a commander of a light infantry battalion.

ENDNOTES

1. Caspar W. Weinberger, Annual Report to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1988, p. 57.

2. Ibid., p. 61.

CHAPTER II

DEFINITIONS

As our battalion commander begins his examination of low intensity conflict and FC 100-20, one of his first steps is to assure himself that he understands what is meant by the term "low intensity conflict." If he has been following his professional journals, he probably has a sensing that many who have written on the subject find the term lacking in clarity. Additionally, it is also likely that he has encountered some misunderstanding among his officers concerning the difference between low intensity conflict and limited war.

APPROVED DEFINITION

The currently approved definition for low intensity conflict contained in FC 100-20 is:

> A limited political-military struggle to achieve political, military, social, economic, and psychological objectives. It is often protracted and ranges from diplomatic, economic, and psychosocial pressures through terrorism to insurgent war. Low intensity conflict is generally characterized by constraints on the geographic area, weaponry, tactics, and level of violence.[1]

Commanders responsible for training soldiers and units tend to look for specified and implied tasks when reading Army publications, and most would probably agree that the definition listed above does not facilitate that process. This definition is probably no better than that found in the current edition

of FM 100-20. That definition describes low intensity conflict as internal defense and development assistance operations, and divides such operations into two types depending on the type of forces employed (combat, or combat support and combat service support).[2]

FC 100-20 does provide additional discussion concerning the definition of low intensity conflict. For example, it states that, "Low intensity conflict involves the actual or contemplated use of military capabilities up to, but not including, combat between regular forces."[3] It is not quite clear how contemplated use of military forces can be included as an element of an actual conflict. Likewise, it is not clear why combat between regular forces is excluded from low intensity conflict.

The field circular separates the Army's missions in low intensity conflict into four categories: terrorism counteraction, peacekeeping operations, peacetime contingency operations, and foreign internal defense.

Terrorism counteraction consists of antiterrorism, which is essentially defensive action taken to reduce vulnerability to terrorist attack, and counterterrorism which is offensive response to terrorist acts.[4] All U.S. military organizations are responsible for security measures to defend themselves against terrorist attacks. Responsibility for offensive measures against terrorist organizations is assigned to the

U.S. Special Operations Force (SOF). Accordingly, the issue of terrorism is not addressed in this paper.

Peacekeeping operations are normally conducted in support of diplomatic efforts to achieve, restore, or maintain peace in areas of potential or actual conflict.[5] The objective of such operations is to preclude rather than prosecute a conflict. Peacetime contingency operations are ". . . normally characterized by the short-term rapid projection or employment of forces in conditions short of war, e.g., strike, raid, rescue, or show of force."[6] They are usually high-intensity operations of short duration.

The fourth mission included in low intensity conflict is foreign internal defense which consists of insurgency and counterinsurgency operations, both of which are generally familiar to most commanders. This final category receives significantly greater emphasis in FC 100-20 and in this analysis.

DISSENTING VIEWS

There is no lack of dissenting views regarding the term and definition of low intensity conflict.

Colonel Dennis M. Drew of the Air University considers low intensity conflict to be a ". . . dismally poor title for a type of warfare in which thousands die, countless more are physically or psychologically maimed and, in the process, the fate of nations hangs in the balance."[7] He calls the term chauvinistic in that it reflects the view of a super-power's

perspective. What may be regarded as a small war to a superpower is frequently a struggle for survival to the principal actors. He prefers the term "non-linear warfare" which ". . . better describes the fluid nature of the battlefield associated with insurgencies and the lack of demarcation and distinction between friendly and enemy forces and territory associated with an insurgency."[8]

Lieutenant Colonel John S. Fulton argues that the approved definition of low intensity conflict is ". . . too broad, that the category is too large, and that the doctrine community may be creating a doctrinal foster home for orphaned warfare concepts."[9] In his view, low intensity conflict is a new phenomenon significantly different from our traditional understanding of war, and that rather than attempt to look for similarities between the two, we should study the unique aspects of low intensity conflict to develop an appropriate doctrine.

"When it comes to actual conflict, we find that the simple classification into high and low intensity conflict can be dangerous if it inhibits our understanding of what the fighting is all about."[10] General John R. Galvin expressed these reservations about low intensity conflict in a recent article in which he also concluded that we may have frustrated our efforts in Vietnam by attempting to make the nature of the conflict fit our understanding of the doctrine.

For Colonel Richard M. Swain, the term low intensity conflict ". . . wraps a set of fundamentally dissimilar activities under a single title and definition."[11] The result, he says, is predictable confusion. He argues that low intensity conflict is not war ". . . but a parallel level of national activity designed to reduce conflicts and that activities of military forces may be categorized in one of two ways--those directed toward prosecution of war and those involved in application of military resources short of war."[12]

In their attempt to sort out the confusion they perceived in the term low intensity conflict, Frank N. Trager and William L. Scully settled on two classes of conflict that they labeled ". . . political instability short of sustained violence, and war, whether declared or undeclared, short of large-scale conventional or strategic wars."[13]

Finally, Professor Bernard B. Fall found the term ". . . sublimited warfare is meaningless, and insurgency and counterinsurgency hardly define the problem."[14] For him, clarity was found in using the term revolutionary warfare, and he provided a definition: "Revolutionary warfare equals guerrilla warfare plus political action."[15] Guerrilla warfare means simply a small war in which all armies know how to fight. The political aspect of the struggle makes these small wars more complex and solutions for them much more than a purely military response.

IS LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT RELEVANT?

It is clear that many members of the Army are not particularly enamored with the term low intensity conflict. Mention of it normally draws an emotional, negative response in Army classrooms, especially from those who served in Vietnam. It embodies several diverse military missions which have significantly different tasks and training requirements, and appears to have earned the connotation of an ignoble or lesser undertaking which deserves something other than our best effort.

On the other hand, it provides a means for categorizing several military operations within a spectrum of conflict and may facilitate a discussion of those operations in terms of the military instrument of power. Through use over the past several years, the term has gained a certain constituency and may also facilitate discussions and decision-making at higher levels. However, for those involved in training soldiers, it, like most umbrella terms, lacks the specificity to convey adequately any significant understanding to soldiers.

ENDNOTES

1. U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Field Circular 100-20, p. v. (hereafter referred to as FC 100-20).

2. U.S. Department of the Army, Field Manual 100-20, p. 274 (hereafter referred to as FM 100-20).

3. FC 100-20, p. v.

4. U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Joint Low-Intensity Conflict Project Final Report: Volume I: Analytical Review of Low-Intensity Conflict, 1 August 1986, p. 1-3.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Dennis M. Drew, Insurgency and Counterinsurgency: American Dilemmas and Doctrinal Proposals, p. 5.

8. Ibid., p. 8.

9. John S. Fulton, "The Debate About Low-Intensity Conflict," Military Review, February 1986, p. 61.

10. John R. Galvin, "Uncomfortable Wars: Toward a New Paradigm," Parameters, Vol. 16, Winter, 1986, p. 7.

11. Richard M. Swain, "Removing Square Pegs from Round Holes," Military Review, December 1987, p. 5.

12. Ibid.

13. Sam C. Sarkesian and William L. Scully, U.S. Policy and Low-Intensity Conflict, p. 177.

14. Bernard B. Fall, "The Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency," Naval War College Review, April 1965, p. 21.

15. Ibid., p. 22.

CHAPTER III

NATURE OF AN INSURGENCY

The most likely as well as the most complex low intensity conflict situation in which the United States may be involved is an insurgency. There exists today in virtually every part of the world an ongoing insurgency which has the potential to affect U.S. national interests. Moreover, it is likely that this ubiquitous form of warfare will continue with the same or increasing frequency in the future. Understanding the essential elements of an insurgency is a prerequisite for understanding how to deter or defeat this type of warfare.

An insurgency is ". . . an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through use of subversion and armed conflict."[1] For all practical purposes, an insurgency is a civil war with the objective of replacing one form of government with another. Although not limited to the Third World, insurgencies tend to occur more frequently in developing nations which are faced with rapid political, economic, and social change. In an attempt to deal with these changes, many developing nations ". . . discard the traditions, values, institutions, and perceptions of a traditional society and replace them with new ones."[2] As a result, feelings of dissatisfaction and discontent with established governments and their policies may be generated making the country vulnerable

to exploitation by militant political groups. Exploitation is more likely to occur when a population's expectations for economic, social, and political improvements exceed the ability of the existing government to make such improvements or when much of the population simply believes that the government is unwilling to make improvements in favor of maintaining the status quo.

REQUIREMENTS FOR INSURGENCY

Each insurgency is unique. Root causes can range from land reform, economic hardship, social injustice, or religious issues. Nonetheless, insurgencies do have some general requirements and characteristics.

A segment of the population must be dissatisfied with the existing government. FC 100-20 lists ten symptoms which may result in a country's population becoming vulnerable to an insurgency. "Whether the dissatisfaction leads to conflict will depend on the people's attitudes, the nation's political and cultural traditions, past experience with political violence, and the degree of political participation by the populace."[3]

A critical element which is absolutely essential to an insurgency is leadership which can rally the people against a government. The fact that a segment of the population, large or small, may be dissatisfied with a government will not in itself result in political violence. Poverty, for example, does not cause insurgencies. The world abounds with nations

and people who live in poverty without resorting to civil war. An insurgency must have skillful leadership to exploit the causes of discontent. Typically, such leadership is likely to come from the middle or upper class rather than the mass of the people.

"Even though a vulnerable population and an insurgent leadership element exist, a successful insurgency is not likely if the government has effective control throughout the country."[4] As long as a government can maintain control of the country, it can probably deter or defeat an insurgency. Control includes use of armed force, either military forces or police organizations, and may be directed against insurgent elements and/or the population as a whole. Control also includes maintenance of an effective political apparatus which can administer the government's programs.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN INSURGENCY

Army doctrine separates insurgencies into three phases.

> Phase I (Latent and Incipient) extends through periods when organized subversive incidents are frequent, but there are no major outbreaks of violence.
>
> Phase II (Guerrilla Warfare) is reached when the subversive movement has gained sufficient local or external support and can initiate organized guerrilla warfare or related violence against the established authority.
>
> Phase III (War of Movement) develops when the insurgency becomes primarily a conventional conflict between organized forces of the insurgents and those of the established authority.[5]

Although the three phases are characteristic of successful insurgencies, they may not necessarily be identified in each insurgency we encounter. Additionally, an insurgency may bypass a particular phase in its development just as it may move from a later stage to an earlier one. The process is normally protracted, and it is possible that one phase may cover several years. Finally, it is difficult to identify accurately each phase at the time it is in the process of developing.

"While the military portion of an insurgency may ebb and flow, the source of insurgent strength, their covert political infrastructure, remains."[6] This infrastructure performs vital functions which include ". . . intelligence gathering, provision of supplies and financial resources, recruitment, political expansion and penetration, sabotage, terrorism and intimidation, and establishment of a shadow government."[7] Elimination of the insurgent political infrastructure is key to the defeat of an insurgency. Insurgent armed forces certainly play an important role in an insurgency, but their defeat alone does not guarantee defeat of the insurgency. "This explains why insurgent forces can lose virtually every battle and yet still win the war."[8] As long as the insurgent political infrastructure remains effective, the insurgency can continue by simply reverting to the latent and incipient phase and renew its efforts to recruit and build additional guerrilla forces.

GUERRILLA WARFARE

In the past there has been a tendency during the conduct of counterinsurgency operations to focus almost exclusively on destroying guerrillas, the armed force of the insurgents. When the insurgents have not developed a political infrastructure, this may be effective. Such was the case in Bolivia in 1967, when a Cuban-initiated insurgency died along with Che Guevara.

The role of the guerrilla in modern insurgencies is probably best described in the Asian Marxist insurgency doctrine developed by Mao Tse-tung and refined by Truong Chin and Vo Nguyen Giap. All three viewed guerrilla warfare as ". . . a continuous activity, even into the final stages of the war."[9] To Mao's doctrine, the Vietnamese added the idea of a general uprising which would place the insurgent's adversary ". . . in a position where he must not only face regular troops in stand-up battles (as in a phase III war of movement), but face the guerrilla as well."[10] Success for the Asian insurgent is ". . . to protract the war, to coordinate the efforts of local and regular troops and guerrillas, and to offset the enemy's mobility and numerical advantage by maintaining great depth to the battlefield."[11] This simultaneous execution of guerrilla warfare and a war of movement significantly complicates the task of those involved in prosecuting counterinsurgency operations.

ENDNOTES

1. FC 100-20, p. 62.

2. Ibid., p. 1-1.

3. Ibid., p. 2-2.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., p. 2-15.

6. Dennis M. Drew, Insurgency and Counterinsurgency: American Dilemmas and Doctrinal Proposals, p. 13.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., p. 16.

9. Rod Paschall, "Low-Intensity Conflict Doctrine: Who Needs It?" Parameters, Autumn 1985, p. 34.

10. Ibid., p. 35.

11. Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

U.S. RESPONSE TO INSURGENCY

Although it is clear that threats to U.S. interests are more likely to fall in the lower end of the spectrum of conflict, it is equally clear that as a nation we have difficulty in reaching a consensus about appropriate response to "wars in the shadows." The following observation included in a recent Time article about the past decade illustrates this difficulty.

> Vietnam and Tet reverberate now in American foreign policy and in American psychology about the rest of the world. Ever since, any attempts to assert American force have twitched a neo-isolationist nerve. Only easy knockouts like Grenada seem tolerable, and then only if done so quickly that television has no time to bring the carnage into the house. But for the experience in Vietnam, the U.S. might have invaded Nicaragua by now; the threat there is more immediate, the logistics easier. Instead, the battle is waged by proxy, sloppily and tentatively and erratically. Involvement and commitment have become dangerous words, alive with the demons of 1968.[1]

Before turning to the methods for defeating insurgencies and the training requirements placed on Army units, our battalion commander should first have an understanding of U.S. policies which determine our strategy and doctrine for insurgency warfare.

U.S. STRATEGY

U.S. policy for dealing with insurgencies is provided in a White House publication, National Security Strategy of the

United States, January 1987. That policy states that when it is in the U.S. interests to do so, the United States:

> Will take measures to strengthen friendly nations facing internal or external threats to their independence and stability by systematically employing, in coordination with friends and allies, the full range of political, economic, informational, and military instruments of power. Where possible, action will be taken before instability leads to violence.
>
> Will work to ameliorate the underlying causes of instability and conflict in the Third World by pursuing foreign assistance, trade, and investment programs that promote economic development and the growth of democratic social and political orders.
>
> May support selected resistance movements acting in opposition to regimes working against U.S. interests. Such support will be coordinated with friends and allies and may contain political, informational, economic, and military measures.
>
> Will take steps to discourage Soviet and other state-sponsored adventurism, and increase the costs to those who use proxies or terrorist and subversive forces to exploit instability in the Third World.[2]

Our stated policy recognizes that long-term political and economic development will reduce instability in the Third World. In addressing military instruments, the policy states that:

> The fundamental tenet of U.S. strategy . . . is that military institutions in threatened states must become able to provide security for their citizens and governments.
>
> U.S. low intensity conflict policy, therefore, recognizes that indirect - rather than - applications of U.S. military power are the most appropriate and cost effective ways to achieve national goals.
>
> The principal military instrument in low intensity conflict, therefore, is security assistance.

> The primary role of U.S. armed forces . . . is to support and facilitate the security assistance program . . . through technical training and logistical support.
>
> U.S. combat forces will be introduced into low intensity conflict situations only as a last resort and when vital national interests cannot otherwise be adequately protected.[3]

In his annual budget report to the Congress in January 1987, Caspar W. Weinberger, then Secretary of Defense, when addressing low intensity conflict, stated that our strategy must be cost-effective given our other defense commitments. He also stated that our objective is not so much winning battles against insurgent forces as it is to ". . . assist in buying time necessary for needed reforms to take root and flourish under governments friendly to the United States."[4] He pointed out that insurgencies defy a purely military solution and that the ". . . United States should not treat lightly the prospect of employing American combat forces."[5]

Our present policy has its roots in the Guam/Nixon doctrine articulated in 1969. Key to that policy is that the host country has the primary burden of resisting aggression, that primary U.S. assistance will be equipment and training, that the magnitude of U.S. support should be commensurate with the threat to our national interests, and that any U.S. participation should have minimal impact on U.S. - USSR relationships.[6]

Alternative Strategies

A January, 1988 report on long-term strategy entitled Discriminate Deterrence includes six basic propositions which

the authors believe should serve as guidelines for U.S. low intensity conflict policy in the future. Recommendations include:

> That U.S. forces will not in general be combatants.
>
> That the U.S. should support anti-Communist insurgencies.
>
> That security assistance requires new legislation and more resources.
>
> That the U.S. needs to work with its Third World allies at developing "cooperative forces."
>
> That our strategy should maximize technological advantages.
>
> That the U.S. should develop alternatives to overseas bases.[7]

These proposals recognize that insurgencies are frequently protracted affairs and that direct military involvement by the United States should be avoided. The report includes a recommendation that resources for our primary instrument for dealing with low intensity conflict situations, security assistance, receive additional funding, and points out that 87 percent of current security assistance funds are earmarked for five countries, leaving few resources for conflicts which threaten U.S. interests in other nations.

William S. Lind suggests that the U.S. renounce the policy of gradualism for dealing with low intensity conflict and replace it with what he terms a decisive blow which he calls a 3-3-3 framework that ". . . would impose both a planning discipline and a high tempo of operations."[8] His proposal would permit insurgents to overthrow a government followed by U.S. intervention characterized by specific military objectives

(overthrow of the insurgent government in three days; destruction of insurgent armed forces in three weeks; and establishment of pacification programs and an effective national police force in three months). At the end of the three months, U.S. forces would leave, with the understanding that we would return if insurgent activity appeared again. Lind believes his strategy would prevent U.S. involvement in a protracted war which he views as a no-win situation.

ARMY DOCTRINE

FM 100-5, the Army's keystone warfighting manual, devotes little attention to low intensity conflict. As our battalion commander reviews it, he will not find much to assist him in identifying specified and implied training tasks. He will, however, find a statement that "Light infantry may be the dominant arm in low intensity conflicts, particularly given their rapid strategic deployability."[9] As a battalion commander in a light infantry division, this statement is likely to get his attention.

He is probably familiar with FC 71-101, Light Infantry Division Operations, along with the limitations, capabilities, and vulnerabilities of the light infantry division. He understands well the limited tactical mobility and combat service support capability of his unit. He may have read a recent article by Howard R. Simpson which described the creation of light battalions in the Vietnamese army to counter the Vietminh in 1953. "The

light battalions may have looked good on paper, but they did not work in the field. Within months, the light battalion project was in tatters. . ."[10]

Perhaps he read a recent TRADOC report on low intensity conflict which contained a conclusion that ". . . light infantry divisions are not currently structured to carry the full burden of military presence in the low intensity area . . . and that they require augmentation if objectives are to be met."[11] Perhaps he has also seen Edward N. Luttwak's article in which he argued that "Low intensity wars should belong to the Special Forces unambiguously and fully, with other service components coming as needed under Special Forces direction."[12] He may be aware of Peter N. Kafkalas' view that ". . . we assume light divisions will automatically know how to fight in an unconventional environment"[13] and that ". . . the Army is still guilty of making counterinsurgency warfare an additional task within the larger framework of conventional doctrine."[14] When he reads the statement that "light infantry is ideally suited for unconventional, low intensity operations," he may be inclined to ask himself "compared to what." Nonetheless, but perhaps with some reservations, he accepts his role in the low intensity arena.

Current Army doctrine for countering insurgencies is based on four interdependent functions - balanced development, neutralization, mobilization, and security.

Balanced development attempts to achieve national goals through balanced political, social, and economic development.

Neutralization includes all lawful activities to disrupt, disorganize, and defeat an insurgent organization.

Mobilization includes all activities to motivate and organize the populace in support of the government.

Security includes all activities to protect the populace from the insurgent and to provide a secure environment for national development.[15]

FC 100-20 provides guidance and direction pertaining to use of security forces as well as the various types of campaigns and operations which may be used. It includes a detailed discussion of how Special Forces and conventional general purpose forces will likely be used with emphasis on security assistance programs. The doctrine mirrors national policy. Although many have criticized it, the doctrine does have several strengths. Among them is a focus on having the host country take the burden in resolving the insurgency with minimal assistance from U.S. combat forces.

ENDNOTES

1. Lance Morrow, "1968," Time, 11 January 1988, p. 21.

2. National Security Strategy of the United States, The White House, January 1987, p. 33.

3. Ibid., p. 34.

4. Caspar W. Weinberger, Report of the Secretary of Defense to the Congress on the FY 1988/1989 Budget and FY 1988-92 Defense Programs, p. 58.

5. Ibid., p. 59.

6. U.S. Army, Training and Doctrine Command, Joint Low-Intensity Conflict Report: Volume I: Analytical Review of Low-Intensity Conflict, 1 August 1986, p. 3-1.

7. U.S. Department of Defense, Report of the Commission of Integrated Long-Term Strategy, Discriminate Deterrence, January 1988, pp. 16-22.

8. William S. Lind, "An Operational Doctrine for Intervention," Parameters, December 1987, p. 32.

9. FM 100-5, p. 41.

10. Howard R. Simpson, "Before the Americans Came . . . the French Connection," Army, November 1987, p. 58.

11. U.S. Army, Training and Doctrine Command, Joint Low-Intensity Conflict Report: Volume II: Issues and Recommendations, 1 August 1986, p. A7-1.

12. Edward N. Lutwak, "Notes on Low-Intensity Warfare," Parameters, December 1983, p. 17.

13. Peter N. Kafkalas, "The Light Divisions and Low-Intensity Conflict: Are They Losing Sight of Each Other?" Military Review, January 1986, p. 24.

14. Ibid., p. 25.

15. FC 100-20, p. 3-3.

CHAPTER V

COUNTERINSURGENCY TRAINING

It is time now for our battalion commander to turn his attention to his mission for training his soldiers and units for counterinsurgency operations. He understands that his government's policy for dealing with insurgencies is to use direct military intervention only as a last resort and that his role in counterinsurgency operations will be primarily in the security role, thereby freeing the host country to focus on the three other functional areas (balanced development, neutralization, and mobilization). Before he identifies specific training tasks, he should first have a general understanding of how to combat an insurgency.

DEFEATING AN INSURGENCY

As he reviews FC 100-20, our commander will not find a detailed "laundry list" offered as a panacea for counterinsurgency operations. He will find that the best cure for an insurgency is prevention. He will also find some general principles pertaining to successful counterinsurgency operations such as ensuring unity of effort, conducting operations in a manner to minimize violence, making maximum use of intelligence, and ensuring responsive action from the government. The importance of civil affairs and psychological operations are stressed.

His review will include the potential use of his soldiers in consolidation and strike campaigns, as well as operations in remote, urban, or border areas.

Foreign Internal Defense Operations

FC 100-20 provides information on the various U.S. government agencies which assist friendly nations in defeating insurgencies. The key role of U.S. Special Forces is discussed in detail, but that portion dealing with what are referred to as "backup forces" will likely receive primary attention by our battalion commander.

Backup forces ". . . should become area oriented and language capable to the extent feasible."[1] This appears to be an obvious area for training emphasis. Commanders of backup forces may also receive a training and advisory mission upon deployment. Other than the language issue, these two types of missions are generally those with which most commanders should feel comfortable.

Our review of FC 100-20 now reaches that portion which deals with populace and resources control and tactical operations, two areas in which we should find some additional training missions. The expectation, however, will not be realized. Discussion of population and resources control consists largely of limitations on U.S. forces involvement. "U.S. forces should direct their efforts to supporting and training local military police forces . . . and participate in populace

control operations only when the situation is clearly beyond the capabilities of the host nation."[2]

Discussion of tactical operations includes several factors unique to counterinsurgency operations ranging from morale, conduct of extended operations in a foreign environment, to required command and staff coordination. Emphasis is placed on conduct of small unit operations with a focus on missions pertaining to area denial, security of installations, and offensive operations directed against the insurgent force. "The hallmark tactics for infantry forces operating in this manner incorporates aggressive patrolling, ambushes, and night operations."[3] The circular then directs the reader to FM 90-8: Counterguerrilla Operations.

Other Views

In his book, Defeating Communist Insurgency, Sir Robert Thompson lists four stages which are involved in defeating an insurgency. He states them simply as ". . . clearing, holding, winning, and won."[4] In the clearing phase, government forces conduct military operations to eliminate insurgent units. The most complex and critical stage is the holding stage which is intended to deny reoccupation by insurgents, and may include a security framework similar to the strategic hamlet concept used in Vietnam. In the third phase, the government takes action to address those political, social, and economic issues which were the root cause of the insurgency. Finally, once

the area has returned to normalcy, it is considered to have been won over from the insurgents.

Professor Fall compared the strategic hamlet concept, ". . . the oil-slick principle, which has been described as the holding of one central area, and working one's way out of the center" to a French system called "gridding" which starts on the periphery and works toward the center.[5]

An understanding of the two techniques mentioned above does much to enhance and bring life to the generic term "populace and resources control" used in FC 100-20, and it is unfortunate that these and other historical perspectives could not have been included when the circular was written.

TRAINING FOR COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS

Commanders can find a discussion of training requirements pertaining to counterinsurgency operations in Appendix H, FC 100-20. Guidance is provided on training U.S. personnel for assistance roles in the host country and for the training of backup forces and general purpose forces. Missions which are emphasized include patrolling, reconnaissance-in-force operations, continuous operations, raids, ambushes, cordon and search, movement to contact, hasty attacks, deliberate attacks, and the perimeter defense. Leadership and night operations are also highlighted. The circular provides a list of subjects for individual, collective, and integrated training events. Used with the information in FM 90-8, any commander could

develop an adequate training program to prepare his soldiers for employment in counterinsurgency operations. Included in the training appendix is a recommendation that ". . . commanders and staff should determine training requirements by visiting the area (host country) as soon as possible after designation."[6] This is a sound recommendation given the unique aspects of insurgency.

Planning a training program and actually executing it are two entirely different activities. What is the reality of training readiness for counterinsurgency operations in the light infantry divisions?

At a recent briefing on the status of light infantry divisions presented at the United States Army War College, a former infantry brigade commander and his successor provided some insight. That portion of the briefing which dealt with training included a busy, demanding schedule of emergency readiness deployment exercises (EDRE) and participation in joint readiness exercises (JRX). The threat scenario involved mechanized infantry and armor conventional forces. The thrust of the entire briefing was the role of light infantry in AirLand Battle doctrine. When asked to describe training programs to prepare this brigade for participation in low intensity conflict situations, both commanders appeared to be momentarily stumped. The incumbent finally stated that most counterinsurgency training was conducted at the battalion or company level in the form of light infantry tactical training

and that his battalions were encouraged to attend the Jungle Operations Training Course (JOTC) in Panama.

Training in Army combat units is, by policy, task-oriented. Individual training is conducted in accordance with a manual which lists common soldier skills and other manuals which list job-specific tasks. The principal training manual for collective training is an Army Training and Evaluation Program (ARTEP) manual. For infantry battalions, that manual is FM 7-15. The current manual does not include any collective tasks or missions for low intensity conflict situations.

According to a recent TRADOC report ". . . most readiness exercises conducted in a low intensity conflict environment are to achieve U.S. regional foreign policy goals, not to evaluate tactics, techniques, and procedures."[7] The report goes on to state ". . . that since the purpose of these exercises is not exclusively training and evaluation, we are without the normal tools to evaluate training."[8] Finally, it concludes that:

> Evaluation criteria for counterinsurgency readiness exercises appear to be inadequate. They do not include such tasks as populace and resources control, encirclement, border control operations, PSYOP/civil affairs activities, and search/clearance of sub-surface facilities. By the very nature of these operations, they are oriented on long-term results, not on results that can be evaluated during conduct of a week-long exercise.[9]

Without specific tasks, conditions, and standards for counterinsurgency missions, it is unlikely that effective training will occur. Other, more traditional infantry missions included in the ARTEP manual will continue to take priority.

ENDNOTES

1. FC 100-20, p. 5-25.

2. Ibid., p. 5-33.

3. Ibid., p. 5-39.

4. Robert Thompson, Defeating Communist Insurgency, p. xii.

5. Bernard B. Fall, "The Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency," Naval War College Review, April, 1965, p. 36.

6. FC 100-20, p. H-3.

7. U.S. Army, Training and Doctrine Command, Joint Low-Intensity Conflict Project Final Report: Volume II: Issues and Recommendations, Fort Monroe, Virginia, 1 August 1986, p. B8-1.

8. Ibid., p. B8-4.

9. Ibid., p. B8-5.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

This look at low intensity conflict was taken from the vantage point of a commander of a light infantry battalion. What conclusions might be drawn from it? Does FC 100-20 provide him with a useful tool to train his soldiers and units for low intensity conflict? Is it a capstone or milestone?

Assuming that our hypothetical battalion commander is a "typical" commander, one could probably argue effectively that he would draw no conclusions whatsoever for the simple reason that he has probably not yet read FC 100-20. His training program is driven by publications which do not specifically address tasks unique to low intensity conflict. Training evaluations for his battalion and subordinate units are conducted in accordance with an ARTEP manual which does not contain low intensity conflict scenarios. Joint exercises in which his unit may participate are not designed to evaluate training or proficiency in low intensity conflict missions. Even if he wanted to conduct training related to low intensity conflict, he would probably find it difficult to free up the time in his training calendar to do so.

Future armed conflict in which the United States may be involved will likely fall in the lower end of the spectrum of conflict. "In the past we have sometimes seen these attacks

as a succession of transient and isolated crises. We now have to think of them as a permanent addition to the menu of defense planning."[1] To ensure the Army is prepared for its role in these future conflicts, we need to get FC 100-20 off the bookshelves and into use. Several things are required. Infantry ARTEP's must be revised to include low intensity conflict missions, and joint exercises involving light infantry forces must include a means for evaluating performance of tasks associated with those missions. More light infantry units need to be scheduled for attendance at the Joint Readiness Training Center. Finally, senior Army leaders must accept current doctrine which assigns low intensity conflict missions to light forces and focus attention on training for these missions. Commanders of light infantry brigades and divisions, for example, must address low intensity conflict training requirements in their training guidance.

The analysis provided in this assessment was limited to one category of low intensity conflict - foreign internal defense. Our training requirements for this mission are generally well known, and the "fix" is a matter of emphasis. However, light forces also require training in peacekeeping operations and contingency missions. Training requirements for these missions can be much more complex and ambiguous. Nonetheless, to be prepared across the spectrum of conflict we need to understand those requirements and develop rational training programs. There is a great danger is assuming light

infantry forces will know inherently how to execute low intensity conflict missions simply because our doctrine states that they are ideally suited for such a role.

In the view of this author, the doctrine in FC 100-20 is sound. It mirrors our national policy, and along with an increased capability of Special Operations Forces, provides us with a framework to respond to threats throughout the spectrum of conflict. Much of the criticism directed at current doctrine pertains to the catchall phrase "low intensity conflict" and definitions of that phrase. The debate and the criticism have little meaning for those of us involved in training soldiers for the specific military missions which are included in low intensity conflict. As professional soldiers, we would be better off spending our time and energy preparing our soldiers and units for those missions rather than engaging in futile discussions of definition and terminology.

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