ARMY DOCTRINE AND IRREGULAR WARFARE

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

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

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The thesis reviews the history and theory of irregular war as a distinct form of conflict that requires a different way of thinking about war. Characterized by protracted conflict and the integration of part-time, non-professional soldiers, the history of irregular warfare demonstrates consistent fundamental differences in the conduct of operations.
The thesis concludes that the US Army must re-look the concept of irregular warfighting and campaign planning to be truly prepared to fight across the spectrum of war. Several fundamental principles are proposed to form a basis for drafting a separate chapter of the new doctrine.

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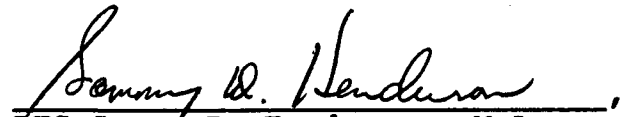
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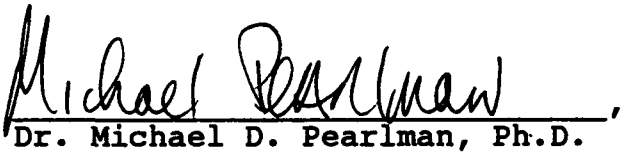
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ABSTRACT

Army Doctrine and Irregular Warfare
by MAJ Michael A. Sheehan, USA, 177 pages

The purpose of this study is to examine the need for the US Army to publish a distinct warfighting doctrine for irregular warfare in the new FM 100-5, Operations. The emerging Army doctrine applies to the entire range of conflict, including "operations short of war." However, the current literature limits the Army to a support role in the level of conflict previously known as "low intensity conflict." Warfighting in the traditional sense is focused on the application of decisive combat, using a modified version of the "AirLand Battle" doctrine.

The thesis reviews the history and theory of irregular war as a distinct form of conflict that requires a different way of thinking about war. Characterized by protracted conflict and the integration of part-time, non-professional soldiers, the history of irregular warfare demonstrates consistent fundamental differences in the conduct of operations.

The thesis concludes that the US Army must re-look the concept of irregular warfighting and campaign planning to be truly prepared to fight across the spectrum of war. Several fundamental principles are proposed to form a basis for drafting a separate chapter of the new doctrine.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the early 1970s, the US Army embarked upon a deliberate process to re-evaluate its warfighting doctrine at the operational and tactical level. The Army, distracted for over 15 years in a protracted "political" war, did not seek to review the deficiencies of its strategy in Southeast Asia, but to focus on the primary threat of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact. Field Manual (FM) 100-5, Operations was designated the capstone document of the Army's warfighting doctrine. Since 1976, the Army has published two additional versions of the document. The first, known as "active defense," was not well received by the Army in the field and was succeeded by the 1982 and 1986 versions of the more offense and maneuver oriented "AirLand Battle." Although considerable debate surrounded the development of these doctrines, the focus was almost exclusively on the conventional battlefield. The 1986 version introduced the concept of low intensity conflict (LIC) as a subset of the doctrine, but did not deal with the subject in any detail.

By the first several months of 1992, the new FM 100-5 has begun to take shape. Tentatively known as "AirLand

Operations," the new doctrine seeks to build upon the validated success of AirLand Battle in Desert Storm, while adapting itself to the realities of the post Cold War era. The new doctrine seeks to include the entire spectrum of war in a comprehensive manner.

This thesis tests the assertion that evolving US Army doctrine adequately addresses low intensity conflict, and specifically irregular warfare. The first two chapters introduce the subject and evaluate the general direction of Army doctrine, low intensity conflict, and irregular warfare. The middle chapters review the practical and theoretical fundamentals of irregular warfare and counter-irregular warfare. The focus of the thesis is at the ambiguous "operational level" of irregular war. A framework for developing a comprehensive irregular warfighting doctrine for the Army is proposed. A major concern of the thesis is the Army's apparent move to separate warfighting AirLand Battle doctrine from non-warfighting LIC functions lumped under the rubric of "peacetime engagement," "nation assistance," or "operations short of war."

The Renewed Importance of Doctrine

In the early 1970s, General William DePuy, the Commanding General of the newly established Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), played a major role in the revitalization of the Army from its post-Vietnam malaise. DePuy decided to update

Army doctrine; and the rewriting of FM 100-5, Operations was to be a principle vehicle for its dissemination. Although much of DePuy's warfighting concepts were rejected by the Army, he succeeded in making FM 100-5 the centerpiece of the Army's future warfighting doctrine. The manual is more than a simple recipe for warfighting; it represents a well thought-out philosophy of war that permeates all subsequent endeavors. Based on its precepts, the Army "furnishes the authoritative foundation for subordinate doctrine, force design, material acquisition, professional education, and training [of the Army]."[1] According to the new manual's principle author, Colonel James McDonough of the School for Advanced Military Studies at Fort Leavenworth; doctrine is "the condensed expression of [the Army's] fundamental approach to *fighting*, and the intellectual distillation of generations of thought mixed with the practical observation of recent developments."[2]

Based upon several documents and articles describing the progress of the new doctrine, it appears the scope of the emerging manual will be adjusted in an attempt to stay current with the rapidly changing international security environment and force "down-sizing." However, according to McDonough, "the conceptual ideas, tenets, imperatives and battlefield framework [of AirLand Battle] should not change, rather it [the new doctrine] expands and refocuses the concepts inherent in AirLand Battle for the Army in a changing strategic

environment."[3]

Post-Vietnam Army doctrine focused almost exclusively on conventional operations, but, over time, the concept of low intensity conflict gradually worked its way into the doctrine. The 1986 manual states; "while emphasizing conventional military operations, [the doctrine] recognizes that Army forces must be capable of operating effectively in any battlefield environment, including low intensity conflict."[4] The new doctrine appears to eliminate the term low intensity conflict and replace it with several other groupings including operations short of war, peacetime engagement, and hostilities short of war. None have discussed the active involvement of US combat forces in irregular warfare.

Low Intensity Conflict and Irregular Warfare

The problem of defining low intensity conflict is the subject of voluminous writing and I will address this important issue in Chapter 2. The broader definitions of LIC includes virtually the entire range of US foreign policy in the Third World. However, by including such a broad array of activities, the military warfighting component "gets lost in the flood." A senior National Security Council advisor, in a general discussion of low intensity conflict with his staff expert on the subject, observed that low intensity conflict - by the broader definition - represents the entirety of US foreign policy short of a major war.[5] The broader definition

of LIC, with the well-intended motive to include the broad range of inter-disciplinary factors, has extended the term to such an extent that it has lost its significance as a separate type of conflict that requires different doctrine and training.

This thesis focuses on what some would consider a very narrow portion of LIC - the military component - and particularly, operational warfighting. In a sense, I will analyze irregular warfare independent of the US role. I will only consider case studies of "shooting wars" - in a wide variety of irregular conflicts. I will focus at the operational level of warfare as defined in FM 100-5 and attempt to describe the operational concepts of campaign planning that have proven effective in military history.

In my view, the US Army must understand irregular warfighting for two reasons. First, the Army will continue to provide support to host countries actively involved in low intensity conflicts of various forms. US Army training and equipment helps shape the doctrine, strategy and tactics of the host country. We must understand the operational nature of irregular war - and not just analyze it in terms of a security assistance role for the United States. Secondly, although it is a less likely scenario, the Army must remained prepared to fight along the entire spectrum of war - including irregular - and not assume a role restricted to security assistance. This would include a major role for Special

Operations Forces (SOF) but also may include the use of Army general purpose forces in an irregular warfighting role. The Army as an institution may be very uncomfortable in another "Vietnam scenario" - an ambiguous protracted war in a deteriorated political environment. However, the Army may find itself in this role, either intentionally (larger political interests may dictate the involvement) or the US Government may be drawn unintentionally into a protracted irregular conflict it did not expect. In all of these cases it is critical for Army planners to understand the operational concepts of irregular warfighting in this paper. I do not want to down-play the vital importance of the non-combative elements of the broader concept of low intensity conflict. These non-warfighting elements are critical to the success of the warfighters will be integrated into the discussion of operational warfighting concepts. However, these issues have been well described in a growing body of literature for peacetime engagement activities.

Irregular Conflict and AirLand Battle Doctrine

The depiction of war across a spectrum of conflict is a commonly used paradigm throughout the US Army in formal and informal discussions and briefings. The spectrum normally runs from peacetime engagement, through "operations short of war", through mid and high intensity war. Low intensity conflict, a rather ambiguous term, normally lies somewhere

within peacetime engagement and operations short of war. (Chapter 2 will depict some of these graphics.)

Although not specifically stated in FM 100-5, the Army has been preparing to fight and win against a numerically superior (Soviet or Middle Eastern) force in developing its doctrine and training in schools and national training centers. The typical training scenario is a mid to high intensity conventional battle with a latent nuclear and chemical threat. Low intensity conflict scenarios have been increasingly incorporated during the late 1980s, primarily for light and Special Operations Forces. The current doctrine for all of these scenarios is AirLand Battle. FM 100-20, Low Intensity Conflict is used to supplement Army doctrine for low intensity threats. The current LIC manual, a joint Army-Air Force endeavor, provides "guidance for planning, coordinating, and executing operations in LIC."[6] In the forward, the two Service Chiefs introduce the manual stating it "explains the subtle yet critical difference between LIC and other conventional operations."[7]

It is not the purpose of this thesis to review FM 100-20. FM 100-5 remains the keystone document for all Army doctrine, FM 100-20 is a supplementary manual. FM 100-5 establishes how the Army thinks about war and directs its training, structure and equipment acquisition.[8] FM 100-20 does not have a significant impact on training, force structure, and warfighting ethos on all Army officers - including those who

are involved primarily in LIC environments (such as Special Operations Forces). Interestingly, Army units are ahead of its doctrine. Many light infantry divisions (such as the 7th, 25th, 82nd, and 101st) are already training extensively in low intensity conflict scenarios in their home base training as well as the Joint Regional Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas.[9]

Research Questions and Scope of Inquiry

To test the applicability of AirLand Battle (ALB) doctrine to irregular warfare requires a series of sequential research steps. The best way to review my research process is to follow the content of each chapter in the thesis:

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Chapter 2 - Discuss AirLand Battle doctrine and irregular war as depicted in FM 100-5 and current Army analysis. In order to fully understand its stated and implied meanings, the following topics will be addressed:

- The recent history and development of ALB
- The salient features of ALB
- Key operational issues for analysis of Airland Battle
- LIC as defined by the Army
- The Army and the spectrum of war
- Review current documents of the emerging doctrine

Chapter 3 - Defines the nature of irregular warfare by discussing its theory and practice for the past twenty-five hundred years.

Reviews ancient irregular warfare including Alexander and Hannibal. Reviews modern irregular warfare including Frederick, Napoleon, and the American Revolutionary War. Introduce the principles of irregular warfare by Clausewitz, Jomini, Sun Tzu, Mao, Giap, and Che Guevara. Summarizes the characteristics of irregular warfare over the ages.

Chapter 4 - Discusses the nature of counter-irregular warfare at the operational level by reviewing modern case studies.

Case studies illustrate classic examples of modern counter-irregular warfare. Case studies will not be fully developed - footnotes and the bibliography will direct readers to additional information on the details of the cases. Short introductory information will be given on each illustrative example. The challenge is not to reveal new discoveries about the campaigns - but to analyze generally accepted information and identify the operational art employed by military forces. The selected case studies are:

The Malayan Emergency (1950s)

The Philippines (1980s)

The US in Vietnam (1960s)

Guatemala (1980s)

El Salvador (1980s)

Chapter 5 - Develop concepts of the operational art of irregular warfare that would form the basis of warfighting doctrine.

Describes the operational level of war and the concept of the operational art. Distills operational concepts of counter-irregular warfare from the historical case studies, both ancient and modern. Develop common themes employed over the centuries as a framework for the analysis of counter-irregular warfare and a foundation for the establishment of doctrine.

Chapter 6 Summarizes conclusions and implications for Army doctrine.

Scope, Assumptions and Anticipated Problems

Current Joint Chiefs of Staff guidance describes low intensity conflict as "political-military confrontation between contending states of groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful competition among states."[10] The manual specifies the concept to include insurgency/counter-insurgency, counterterrorism, peacekeeping operations, and the rather ambiguous category of contingency operations.[11] Although this definition continues to exist, emerging Army doctrine replaces the term with the concept of "operations short of war" to include a wide range of peacetime activities such as humanitarian assistance and nation building. During

the 1980s, scholarly work in the field of low intensity conflict focused on insurgency and counterinsurgency. In a Cadre Paper for the Air University Colonel Dennis Drew notes the representative nature of insurgency in the study of low intensity conflict;

> Terrorism, for instance, is a tactic rather than a kind of warfare, and it is a tactic that can be used in any type of conflict. Peacekeeping missions (e.g. sending Marines to Lebanon) have as their objective the prevention of conflict rather than the persecution of conflict. Finally, direct action missions (contingency operations) tend to be high in intensity but short in duration, a situation particularly unsuitable for the rubric of low intensity conflict.[12]

Drew makes a good case for the study of insurgency and counterinsurgency as a representative activity for LIC - and it was especially valid during the Cold War era. Recently, with the wars in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Angola, and Afghanistan ending or being drastically reduced, the study of contemporary issues has shifted to nation building, post conflict operations (such as rebuilding Panama or dealing with Kurdish refugees), and peacekeeping operations. These activities are not warfighting; thus the study of low intensity conflict operations has moved even further away from concepts of warfighting - towards nation building activities.

In this study, I will focus on the warfighting concepts of irregular war. In recent conflicts, this has been largely the study of insurgency and counterinsurgency - but these types of warfare are subsets of a much larger type of conflict I refer to as irregular warfare. I have specifically focused

on irregular warfare because it narrows the discussion to warfighting, an area of neglect. Many recent studies of low intensity conflict, focus on political, economic, social, and civic action/nation-building elements of the struggle, have neglected the military warfighting component. The socio-political focus of irregular warfare is appropriate - unfortunately, in the process the military component of LIC has dropped out of favor.

This thesis is predicated on the assumption that deficiencies will be identified in the Army doctrine in its application to LIC. This is based partially on my previous research: "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies: Guatemala and El Salvador,"[13] and research conducted during an extensive visit to the Philippines in the summer of 1987.[14] The research for this thesis was founded upon my findings of a significant difference in the nature of irregular warfighting.

Literature Review

Since the early 1980s, there has been a considerable amount of scholarly work on the general subject of low intensity conflict. The writings of the early 1980s were focused largely on defining the low intensity conflict threat to American national security interests. Most authors criticized the United States Government for not recognizing the nature of the threat and for failing to take appropriate measures to confront the challenge. Much of the initial

criticisms came from the civilian, academic community - not from within the Department of Defense. However, the Army also would provide significant contributions to the debate by the mid 1980s.

General Studies

In his two volume series, War in the Shadows: The Guerrilla in History, Robert Asprey chronicles the history of irregular warfare in an attempt to put the Vietnam conflict in perspective. From Alexander and Hannibal; through the dawn of modern warfare in Europe, including Frederick and Napoleon; to the more familiar modern insurgency leading up to the Vietnam war; Asprey describes the leaders, campaigns and strategies of irregular warfare. Walter Laqueur contributes to the historical perspective of irregular warfare in his book The Guerrilla Reader: A Historical Anthology. Laqueur assembled the writings primarily of practitioners of irregular warfare, but also added some theoreticians and observers in an interesting assembly of documents. The history of irregular warfare is also found in most general studies of warfare - both as separate subjects and within its other studies.

Modern Theory of Limited War

In the modern era, irregular warfare has been most often associated with limited war. Robert E. Osgood was one of the first academics to describe limited war in the cold war era.

His book, Limited War Revisited (1979), Osgood updates his earlier version in light of the American experience in Vietnam. According to Osgood, limited war had two strands - the Clausewitzian inspired conventional force of combat and deterrence practiced by the West -and the Maoist inspired third world nationalist revolutionaries.[15] In each case, the limited war that emerged in the West during the 1950s limited both the means and ends of war. As in previous wars, "they were limited by the nature of the political stakes and/or the limited capacity of the belligerent."[16] However, because of the East-West strategic context of the conflict, the outcomes of the war were tied to the vital interest of the Soviet threat, and therefore, the United States was drawn many of into these conflicts.

One problem for the United States, describes Osgood, was its inability to develop an operational capability to meet the strategic purpose of limited wars, particularly counterinsurgency.

> Strategic theory in the United States is relatively free to respond to perceptions of national interests, the military balance, and domestic and foreign imperatives. Operational plans are constrained by the standard procedures of military organization, training and the assignment of service missions. Acquisition is skewered by our desire to substitute firepower for manpower and through a tradition of overpowering the adversary's manpower and logistics with massive striking force and attrition.[17]

Osgood was responding to the Army's conduct in Vietnam, but the warning has relevance for any period. The Army would

agree with Osgood's observation that "the actual conduct of the war is conditioned by the ingrained doctrine, training and organization of the military establishment."[18] But would be troubled by his implication that the Army's doctrine was unsuitable for Vietnam.

Osgood's concern is that strategic imperatives are more flexible than military doctrine and capabilities - a mismatch that serve us very poorly in the Vietnam War. This was best demonstrated by Andrew Krepinevich in his book, The Army and Vietnam. In this well-documented account of the Army's conduct of the war, Krepinevich demonstrates that despite a great deal of "lip service" and some half-hearted activity, the Army was never committed to the counterinsurgency doctrine mandated by the national strategy. Instead, it executed the type of war it knew best - a conventional war of attrition. (This is further discussed in Chapter 3.)

Today, some observers have the same concerns for the US Army's AirLand Operations doctrine that has evolved during the 1980s. According to Major Jeff Long, the Army's new doctrine is more the result of a bureaucratic drive to acquire weapons systems it preferred to fight in the type of battle it preferred to fight - not necessarily what the national strategy required.[19] Long contends that in 1982 the Army rejected rigorous analytical methods to validate their doctrine (as they had in the "active defense") and through a "casual sampling of history, the Army portrayed organizational

interests as operational requirements."[20]

The concerns raised by Osgood and others on the difficulty of the Army to change its operational procedures to meet strategic goals in irregular warfare is a central concern of this thesis.

The LIC Advocates

Dr. Sam Sarkesian of Loyola University was one of the pioneers of modern LIC theory and policy debate. In November of 1979, Sarkesian and his school, Loyola University of Chicago, sponsored a conference on low intensity conflict that eventually produced the book, US Policy and Low-Intensity Conflict. This book, a compilation of articles by some of the better LIC critics of the day, framed much of the policy debate in the early 1980s. Sarkesian also published several insightful articles during the 1980s on the subject. In one article, he reviewed the literature of the themes of American policy on revolution and counter-revolution. In his conclusions, he identified a major shortcoming in the body of literature:

> On the one hand, there are excellent intellectual analysis of revolutionary concepts and the general boundaries and substance on revolution... military studies usually view the problems on the tactical level dealing with specific military actions. Literature dealing with the broader issues are just that - broad policy perspectives that tend to become mired in moral dimensions which in many instances lack linkage with the real world.[21]

I have found this observation to be particularly accurate. The operational level of war is not well covered in the current body of literature. The strategic analysis of the "LIC community" did not translate into operational-level lessons for the way the military planned and conducted campaigns.

At the strategic level, a general consensus was established among the "LIC" community - a rapidly expanding cottage industry of "instant" experts during the mid to late 1980s. It normally included the following points:

- The US Government did not fully understand the political-military nature of low intensity conflict threat.

- The US Government underestimated the insidious encroachment on US interests by accumulated LIC threats and failed to apply the proper amount of resources to the challenge.

- Once committed, the US Government policy failed to provide an integrated framework for formulating strategy and implementing programs.

- The US Government did not have the personnel and doctrinal capability in Defense or other civilian agencies to address the threat.

-Although advocating a more active US role, few, if any, proposed the introduction of US combat troops.

The barrage of literature at the strategic level, and the continuous LIC debate within the defense community during the 1980s, contributed to Congressional legislation to mandate the creation of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low intensity Conflict (OSD SO-LIC), the Special Operations Command, and the National Security Council's LIC board.[22]

At the tactical level, there was also general consensus. Most authors acknowledged the supremacy of the political element. Clausewitz was often evoked and most authors correctly identified the host country's population as the "center of gravity." Most suggested an integrated strategy founded on extensive intelligence, small unit tactics, psychological operations, and civic action to gain the support of the local populace. These are sound tactics, however, the operational level and campaign planning remained neglected.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Army was suffering more than any other service from the lingering malaise of the Vietnam War. The Department of Defense and especially the Army, were reluctant to become involved in any more "unpopular wars" that would threaten the ongoing massive conventional build up. This was perhaps best summed up by Caspar Weinberger's controversial six points published in Foreign Affairs in 1986. Briefly, his prerequisites for committing US troops to combat were the following:

- vital US interests are at stake

- commit only with sufficient forces to win decisively

- clearly defined political and military objectives

- continually reassess the situation and take appropriate military response [win decisively or get out]

- reasonable assurance of public support

- combat forces are a last resort after failure of diplomatic, political, and economic efforts.[23]

Nevertheless, the academic community and a growing community of voices within the defense community (particularly in the increasingly active Congress), continued to press the case that low intensity conflict was the most probable battleground of US national security interests. In addition, the US was losing ground in key strategic points around the world to LIC threats. Osgood and Sarkesian laid the theoretical foundation for a deluge of books and articles that followed.

The Skeptics

Initially, there was little opposition to the general concepts of low intensity conflict, within or outside the Department of Defense. The Army was not distracted in its primary course of conventional force modernization and the development of AirLand Battle doctrine. The issue galvanized as the Reagan doctrine sought to roll back the communist

threat in the first few years of the Administration. Reagan sought not only to contain Soviet sponsored aggression in the Third World (such as in El Salvador) - but to turn it back in Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, and Nicaragua. LIC became an active policy in the 1980s.

A range of criticisms accompanied Reagan's aggressive Third World policy. The Democratic opposition generally criticized the military dominance of the policy as an ill-advised approach; not necessarily the objectives of the policy. Sharper criticism from the left accused the government of more cynical motives. Low intensity conflict was characterized as a subterfuge to promote neo-imperialistic politics or hegemonic American designs.

The Vietnam War

A thorough discussion of US Army doctrine and low intensity conflict can not be made without considering the Army's experience in Vietnam. Two authors, neither representing the Army's official point of view, represent conflicting interpretations of US policy. Harry Summers (a veteran of the Vietnam and Korean Wars) uses the principles of war and draws heavily on Clausewitz to criticize the national strategy and maladroit use of military power. Andrew Krepinevich, a younger officer of the post Vietnam generation, criticizes the Army in failing to understand and implement an effective counterinsurgency strategy. Krepinevich argued the

Army remained wedded to the inappropriate application of conventional military strategy and tactics in fighting a revolutionary war. Summers insists the Army succeeded in logistics and tactics yet was let down by the national leadership in its failure to define military objectives and a realistic military strategy to accomplish those ends. An understanding of the arguments of these two authors provides the groundwork for much of the continuing debate in the Army on the issue of low intensity conflict. How one interprets the Army's experience in Vietnam strongly influences one's disposition to the Army in low intensity conflict.

The rest of the LIC literature can be divided into two broad categories: 1) books and edited compilations of case studies on countries involved in LIC and 2) journal articles on the general failure of USG and military policies. There are few articles that specifically address the issue of Army doctrine and LIC. For the most part, the analysis remains at the strategic level and advocate a more comprehensive, political understanding of the nature of the problem and invariably call for better integrated use of psychological operations, civic action, and other nation building instruments. Some studies also analyze the tactical level, but very few, if any, truly approach the operational level of irregular warfighting.

Army Doctrine

In order to understand the deeper significance of Army doctrine it is essential to understand the recent evolution of its process and content. Through the study of its recent history and the bureaucratic struggles over theory, concepts, and content; the importance of doctrine and the significance of its components is realized. Several outstanding historical analysis on the evolution of Army doctrine have been completed in the last several years. Three outstanding monographs have been published that outline the doctrinal debate that transpired in the writing of Army doctrine. Robert Doughty's The Evolution of US Army Tactical Doctrine,1946-76, (one of a series called The Leavenworth Papers) is an outstanding summary of the fundamental issues that have consistently been at the core of Army doctrinal debate. He also does a fine job of summarizing Army counterinsurgency doctrine developed during the Vietnam years.

Another Leavenworth paper, by Major Paul Herbert, Deciding What Needs to Be Done: General William DePuy and the 1976 Edition of FM 100-5, Operations, details the development of the "active defense" in the 1976 version and the ascendancy of FM 100-5 as a truly representative "capstone manual." John Romjue's, From Active Defense to AirLand Battle: The Development of Army Doctrine, 1973-1982, is an outstanding study of the Army's drastic shift from the "active defense" advocated by DePuy, to the more offensive and maneuver

oriented doctrine of AirLand Battle.

Major Jeffrey Long nicely summarizes the development of recent Army doctrine in a Fort Leavenworth monograph entitled "The Evolution of US Army Doctrine: From Active Defense to AirLand Battle and Beyond." He applies political-science models to explain the external and internal dynamics that shaped the final products.

History of the Operational Art for Irregular Warfare

The operational level of war has just recently regained favor as a separate discipline in the West. The Russians were always aware of this level of war and its application for their huge Armies. The Russians recognized that their Armies may be beaten in battle engagements but could prevail through shear numbers and the persistence of their deep penetrations and turning movements. The operational level of war, nestled between the tactical and strategic, is often covered in the writings at both levels, but rarely as a separate discipline in the US Army. Operational concepts are most often discussed in books that address the military strategic level of war - not the detailed discussion of tactical maneuver. In the 1980s, the West sought to catch up.

The history of irregular warfare is well documented, as mentioned earlier in such books as Asprey's War in the Shadows. The operational art for irregular warfare, however, is a more elusive subject. One of the better books on the

subject is Archer Jones, The Art of Warfare in the Western World. Jones does not specifically address the operational level of war, but concerns much of historical analysis at this level. The earliest writings of war in the West, by the Greek Herodotus, and the east, by Sun Tzu, date to about 500 B.C. Both contribute to the history and theory of irregular warfare.

The dawn of modern warfare, between the 16th and 17th centuries, renewed the theory and practice of irregular warfare. Clausewitz and Jomini both wrote on the subject of limited war and the "Great Captains" of their day. Frederick, Napoleon, and Wellington all had varying experiences with irregular warfare. Although not studied as a separate discipline during this period, most of the fundamental operational concepts, that were later to be fully developed in the post World War II era, were conducted during this period.

It is during the post World War II era that irregular warfare became a dominant form of warfare that finally merited separate theory and doctrine. The writings of Mao, Giap, and Che Guevara provide a rich foundation of theory and practice of revolutionary guerrilla warfare, an important subset of irregular warfare. The British experience in their post-colonial wars and the American experience in the Third World battlegrounds of the cold war provide fertile ground for counter-irregular warfare theory and practice.

Unfortunately, despite the numerous writings on insurgency and counterinsurgency there is precious little dedicated to the operational art. However, much can be gleaned from the writings. British Generals and scholars, Robert Thompson and Frank Kitson, provide excellent analysis of the British experience and much of their material is at the operational level. Two American practitioners and scholars, Douglas Blaufarb and George Tanham, provide some of the more insightful analysis on the American side of the Atlantic on the "counterinsurgency era."

From these and other writings, I have tried to synthesize the operational art and campaigning concepts of irregular and counter-irregular warfare that would form the basis for the development of a warfighting doctrine.

Endnotes

1. US Army, FM 100-5, Operations, (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1986), p. 2.

2. James R. McDonough, "Building the New FM 100-5," Military Review, (October 1991), p. 5.

3. McDonough, p. 6.

4. FM 100-5, 1986, p. ii.

5. Personal interview with Special Assistant to the President for International Programs, National Security Council, with responsibilities for low intensity conflict, June, 1990.

6. US Army and Air Force, FM 100-20, Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict, (Washington, DC: Department of the Army and Air Force, December, 1990) p. i.

7. FM 100-20, p. i.

8. Colonel McDonough, the author of the new FM 100-5 describes the manual as "keystone" - or the central piece in the architecture of doctrine. He also describes doctrine as the "way in which an the Army thinks about war." Command and General Staff College briefing, April, 1992.

9. Conversations with former staff personnel and participants of the training in the Joint Regional Training Center, between 1990 and 1992, March and April 1992.

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11. Joint Pub 3-07 p. I-2.

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13. Michael A. Sheehan, "Comparative Counterinsurgency Strategies: Guatemala and El Salvador," Conflict, An International Journal Volume 9, 1989, pp 127-154.

14. In the summer of 1987 I was an intern for the Army Staff, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Strategic Plans and Policy. I conducted extensive research on the insurgency in the Philippines including a one month trip -

spent traveling in the field with Filipino units.

15. Robert E. Osgood, Limited War Revisited, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1979), p. 2.

16. Ibid, p. 4.

17. Ibid, p. 12.

18. Osgood, p. 12.

19. Jeffrey Long, "The Evolution of US Army Doctrine: From Active Defense to AirLand Battle and Beyond," MMAS Thesis, US Army Command and General Staff College, (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1991)

20. Ibid, p. 247.

21. Sam Sarkesian, "American Policy on Revolution and Counterrevolution: A Review of the Themes in the Literature," Conflict, Volume 5 No 2, 1984, p. 176.

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23. Caspar Weinburger, "US Defense Strategy," Foreign Affairs, Spring 1986, pp. 686-7

CHAPTER 2

AIRLAND BATTLE DOCTRINE

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the nature of AirLand Battle doctrine and what it means to the Army. A brief historical review of the Army's recent doctrinal developments and the nature of the debates illuminates the core issues and the "essence" of Army doctrine. It is also important to review those issues the Army has elected not to cover in the manual or debate. Since General DePuy elevated the importance of FM 100-5 in 1976, the manual has played a central role in defining the Army's doctrine. This is not to say FM 100-5 is the sole means of developing and disseminating Army doctrine. General DePuy, for instance, had a significant and lasting impact on the how the Army trains, organizes and equips itself even though his concepts in FM 100-5 were rejected by the Army.[1]

The Army defines its doctrine through a broad array of activities - training, formal schooling, seminars, field exercises, and its other manuals. FM 100-5 is a reflection of the wide range of Army initiatives that form the cumulative expression of its doctrine. FM 100-5 serves as the foundation for the articulation of these concepts in general terms and

the writing of new versions of FM 100-5 serves as a focal point for discussion of new issues. For this reason, and restraints on time and space, I have decided not to discuss in depth FM 100-20, Low Intensity Conflict - except in the context of its relationship to FM 100-5.

The debate over an offensive or defensive posture or propensity was perhaps the central issue of contention in the 1976 manual. The debate over the superiority of defense and offense is age-old. Clausewitz struggled with the issue, and in typical form, came down on both sides of the argument. The British theorist, Richard Simpkin discusses a related theoretical construct in his book, Race to the Swift, in discussing attrition and maneuver theories. Attrition theory focuses on an enemy's combat power (soldiers and weapons systems) and emphasizes relative strengths (force ratios) as a determinant of victory.[2] The American tradition of war since Grant's pursuit of the Northern Army of Virginia through the World Wars was inclined to capitalize on American material strength and to destroy the enemy's military force. Although it would be a gross oversimplification to say attrition theory advocates the defense, compared to maneuver theory, it is less inclined to use audacious, bold offensive maneuver to defeat an enemy's will instead of his combat power.

Maneuver theory is often thought of as favoring the offense. It uses maneuver to dislocate the enemy and targets

his will "or failing this by speed and appropriateness of response" by striking deep into his rear area.[3] Grant also recognized the value of this theory in sending Sherman across the heart of the South's rear to shock its population and destroy its will and ability to resist.

Liddel Hart and his well known theory of the "indirect approach" embodies the "maneuver" theory. Hart also recognized "the immense inherent strength of modern defense" in describing the German's ability in at the end of World War II to "beat off attacks delivered with a superiority of over six to one, and sometimes over twelve to one." He concludes; "it was space that beat them."[4]

"Ultimately," according to Simpkin, "one sees a duality of relationship between attrition theory and maneuver ... and once fighting starts the two theories become complimentary.[5] It is the combination of the two at the tactical, operational, and strategic level to meet strategic objectives that is the key to success. A well known example of combining strategic and tactical duality is Longstreet's concept for Lee's invasion of the North in 1863. Longstreet, a defense advocate, felt that Lee should take the strategic offensive by boldly striking into Pennsylvania - but should then seek the tactical defense and let the Army of the Potomac attack superior defensive positions of the Confederates.

The history of modern warfare theory and doctrine can be viewed as a constant shifting and melding of maneuver and

attrition theories. Army doctrine would prove to be no exception - and in a sense, as we shall see later, irregular warfare concepts have a similar duality.

The 1976 Manual - Active Defense

The new 1976 edition used an eye-catching camouflaged covered manual, complete with pictures, graphs and charts was titled simply, Operations. The defensive orientation of the manual was quickly evident:

> The purpose of military operations, and the focus of this manual, is to describe how the US Army destroys enemy military forces and secures or defends important geographic objectives.[6]

The defensive posture of the manual reflected a perception of the Soviet-Warsaw Pact advantage in sheer numbers, especially tanks. While the US was bogged down in Vietnam the Soviet Union was embarking on a rapid force modernization and expansion throughout its Army - and the balance in Europe seemed to have shifted in their favor considerably. Psychologically, the American people, after enduring humiliation in Vietnam and the disgrace of "Watergate", did not seemed poised to demonstrate steadfast resolve in the face of an imposing enemy. DePuy was convinced the Army must be capable of "winning the first battle of the first war [in Europe]."[7]

If the new doctrine was not fully biased to the defense it was certainly focused on the application of firepower and

to a lesser extent, maneuver. The second chapter in the manual discusses the new lethality of modern weapons systems that will shape the nature of the next battlefield. The third chapter describes the "battlefield dynamics" required to win. "Adequate forces and weapons must be concentrated at critical times and places. The combination is combat power."[8]

The role of maneuver and mobility became apparent in the latter chapters discussion of the active defense. "Yet the new doctrine stressed maneuver predominantly in the sense of moving to deliver firepower or to increase combat power."[9]

More detailed information on the active defense appeared in later manuals. FM 71-100, Armored and Mechanized Division Operations, stated:

> The concept of the active defense is to defeat the attacker by confronting him with strong combined arms teams fighting from battle positions organized in depth. As the enemy attack moves into the defended area, it encounters fires of increased intensity delivered from the front and especially from the flanks. The defender constantly shifts forces to take maximum advantage of the terrain, and to put himself in a favorable position to attack.[10]

AirLand Battle - The Ascendancy of the Offense

The authors of the 1982 edition of FM 100-5 sought to infuse the new doctrine with more offensive spirit. However, they also learned from the lessons of DePuy's single-mindedness and sought a general consensus from the Army in developing the doctrine. The new edition founded its conclusions on a studious analysis of the principles of war

(described in an annex) and the fundamental theoretical doctrines of Clausewitz. Historical vignettes were used to illustrate principles and build credibility. A series of imperatives and tenets were devised to guide Army leaders in applying tactics to an operational plan.

The 1982 version distanced itself from the active defense of the 1976 edition by proclaiming:

> The offense is the decisive form of war, the commanders only means of attaining a positive goal or of completely destroying an enemy force ... the defense denies success to an attacking enemy ... to win, one must attack.[11]

According to Jeff Long in his outstanding review of doctrinal developments, "The Evolution of US Army Doctrine,"

> AirLand Battle derived from maneuver theory, not attrition theory; it focused on maneuver rather than firepower; it stressed the human dimension of war instead of the technical; and it favored the offense over the defense.[12]

The obvious offensive counter-reaction of the 1982 edition was toned downed somewhat through a more balanced appreciation for the defense. If the 1976 version seemed to favor firepower and the 1982 maneuver, the 1986 version sought a balance among the two -- but remained favorable to the offensive. It states; "the offensive is the decisive form of war -- the commanders ultimate means of imposing his will upon the enemy."[13] However, true to the Clausewitzian dialectic of countering its own assertions of earlier chapters, the 1986 version still maintains that the "defense is the strongest

form of war." [14]

AirLand Operations

Although the new doctrine has yet to be published its character is beginning to emerge. In the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the overwhelming victory of Desert Storm, the doctrinal authors are under an enormous strain to develop a new doctrine to address the new and ambiguous challenges of a new world order and rapidly shrinking defense budgets. A TRADOC pamphlet, "AirLand Operations: The Evolution of AirLand battle for a Strategic Army" outlines the tasks of the new doctrine. Like its predecessors, it describes how the Army operates and is a guide for [further] doctrine, training, organization, material, and leader development. The purpose of the document is not to prescribe doctrine but to initiate the discussion and define the parameters for the evolving doctrine.[15]

It is quickly apparent in the emerging doctrine that strategic considerations will be integrated into the doctrine unlike any of its predecessors. A combination of factors drove the strategic considerations of the doctrine. Regional contingency operations, such as Just Cause and Desert Storm, are the wave of the future for Army planners. Previously, the Army prepared for wars in places they were already established, such as Europe, Korea and to a lesser extent Vietnam. Now, forward deployed forces are returning home and

potential threats are unclear. The Army must be ready to deploy and fight across the operational continuum.

Bureaucratically, the Army is being forced to reshape its capability and mission to prevent an even more rapid reduction in its size as the European threat dissolves. According to the TRADOC pamphlet,

> AirLand Operations focuses on seeking opportunities to dictate how we will fight -- in nonlinear conditions, with the advantage of operational fires and maneuver and with the emergent superiority of applied technologies.[16]

To provide a structure for planning, the Army introduces a new framework for operations;

> the Army conducts operations by performing four interrelated functions - stages of the operational cycle - designed to focus all elements of the force.[17]

These elements are 1)selection and detection, 2) establishing conditions for decisive operations 3) decisive operations and 4) force reconstruction. The discussion in the pamphlet is largely dedicated to conventional operations (nine pages). Following this section is "operations short of war." The first sentence of this section states that these operations are the most likely threats to our national interests, but primarily by supporting our friends and allies (emphasis added). It goes on to say that "much of the warfighting concept is applicable to the execution of operations in operations short of war."[18]

It is here in AirLand Operations that problems fitting low intensity conflict into conventional warfighting paradigms that problems begin to emerge. Previous doctrine (1976 - active defense) started off ignoring low intensity conflict, while the two editions of AirLand battle slowly introduced the issue - but glossed over any differences in the operational art with vague platitudes about "political predominance." In fact, all military instruments of power are subject to political considerations (a fundamental Clausewitzian doctrine familiar to Army doctrine writers), but politics are viewed as a factor for strategic level decisions not effecting the operational level of conflict. With this unstated presumption, AirLand Battle and its successor, AirLand Operations, isolates the strategic from the operational, and focuses on decisive combat. It is not the purpose of this thesis to evaluate the soundness of this rationale for conventional operations - however, it becomes immediately apparent that in low intensity conflict this premise presents significant problems.

Levels of War: Tactical, Operational and Strategic

As stated up front in the thesis, the Army sought to return its focus to conventional warfare at the operational level. There is very little mention of the strategic level of warfare or the implications of national strategy in the 1976 edition of 100-5. The 1982 edition adds contingency

operations (outside of Europe) and implies the Army may be called to execute other operations in a different strategic environment. The 1986 edition also recognizes a changing strategic environment, but is satisfied that it will not change the operational art:

> This manual does not address the formulation of US strategies for deterrence or warfighting. It provides doctrinal guidance for conducting campaigns and major operations within the broader framework of military strategy.[19]

According to Long, "the 1982 edition introduced the operational level of war; the 1986 edition gave it substance."[20] "Analysis at the operational level views war as a clash between "the directing minds" of the two antagonists and their "conceptual methods of action." The technical aspects of war are relegated to the tactical level.[21] The strategic is seen more of a political decision, once made (to commit US combat troops) the operational doctrine can be applied.

People: The Role of the Population

The role of the population is not an important element in the doctrine of active defense or AirLand battle. Again, this reflects a turning away from the painful experiences of Vietnam and turning to the experience of conventional warfare - such as World War II. In conventional wars, although the population suffers tremendously, they are not normally a decisive factor in operational plans. The 1976 edition of

100-5, focused exclusively on the European scenario, virtually ignores the role of the population. The 1982 edition, expanding its horizons beyond Europe and acknowledging the rise of low intensity conflict thinking in the defense community, adds brief sections on unconventional warfare, psychological operations, and civil military operations. However, they are not an integral part of the principle doctrine.

Decisive Combat and Prolonged Warfare

The spirit of AirLand Battle is very apparent in its imperatives. Several of the ten imperatives prescribe decisive combat operations:

- Press the fight
- Move fast, strike hard, and finish rapidly
- Conserve strength for decisive action[22]

Low intensity conflict is described in its official definition as often being "protracted". The case studies and lessons learned of this thesis will search for clues for the applicability of these imperatives to low intensity conflict at the strategic, operational and tactical level. This review will compliment the earlier discussion of the relationship between strategic considerations and operational planning and doctrine.

Low Intensity Conflict Defined and Refined

The term low intensity conflict is dying a slow death. The Army is clearly moving away from the term and the interagency community has also rejected the term except for the Department of Defense.[23] The Army, measured by the new doctrinal literature being circulated at Fort Leavenworth and in Washington, DC, is moving away from the term low intensity conflict. Also, the Army has responded to the "LIC advocates" repeated emphasis on the political nature of the challenge and the utility of non-warfighting instruments - and the relative futility of combat power. By separating the warfighting out of the "lower end of the spectrum" AirLand Battle has remained the single focus for warfighting doctrine in the Army. There is little discussion of a US Army role in irregular, protracted or political wars. LIC is becoming increasingly associated with peacetime engagement - and security assistance its principle instrument (consistent with FM 100-20). The purpose of this chapter is to review the definition problems of low intensity conflict and discuss the implications of the evolving tendency to lump low intensity conflict operations into the non-warfighting ends of the conflict spectrum.

The problems in defining "low intensity conflict" are complex and <u>important</u>. Although the JCS has an official definition, virtually no one is satisfied it, including the original authors. Any discussion, panel, class room

instruction, book, manual, or conference dealing with low intensity conflict begins with a difficult and often tiresome re-hashing of battles over definition. Sometimes these discussions can be frivolous and distracting, but more often they are important distinctions that define the problem. It has been said that the hardest part of problem solving is to define the problem or to ask the right question; this is very true in studying low intensity conflict and it starts in defining the term itself and continues throughout virtually any other aspects of the problem.

This chapter will review some of the more prevalent definitions and depictions of LIC (through the ubiquitous Army slide of view graph training aid) and supplement the discussion with historical examples to bring clarity to the definition of LIC that will be used in this study. The focus of this study and the following discussion will be on the spectrum of LIC that includes warfighting, with host country military and/or American ground forces and advisors. LIC also includes conflict prior to or after armed hostilities, but the focus of this study will remain on the warfighting period of LIC.

The following graphic depictions represent some of the thinking in the Army today on the scope of low intensity conflict.

Figure 1: The Operational Continuum

Interpretation. Perhaps the most common and easily understood of the graphic models in circulation, this model is consistent with the JCS definition - except the term "low intensity conflict" is no longer included. [Low intensity] conflict is depicted in the area between normal peacetime competition and conventional war. AirLand Operations doctrine is applied across the entire spectrum of war. Nation assistance and peacetime engagement (referring to USG actions) are also conducted across the spectrum.

Implications. Airland Operations applies fully to LIC. Other instruments of military power (nation assistance) outside the realm of AirLand Operations are also applied across the spectrum. Low intensity conflict operations are a subset of AirLand Operations and do not require a separate warfighting doctrine.

Figure 2: Expanded Operational Continuum

Interpretation. AirLand Battle focuses on operational warfighting that is applied to low intensity as well as mid and high intensity war. AirLand Operations includes other military activities, not involving combat operations (peacetime engagement and post-conflict activities), to be included in the new doctrine, but not necessarily "warfighting".

Implications. AirLand Operations still is fully applicable for LIC. The doctrine is also expanded to consider strategic considerations (the strategic end-state) and non-warfighting activities, expanding the narrow focus at the operational level. For LIC operations, strategic considerations ripple throughout the operational level of war and down to the tactical. Again, LIC is not mentioned in the graphic and its implied place is in peacetime engagement and post-conflict activities. AirLand Battle (Operations) is the sole warfighting doctrine.

Figure 3: Army Contingencies

Interpretation. This is an older, more specific depiction of the types of conflict found along the continuum. LIC operations that involve combat action (not necessarily, but potentially American soldiers) short of a full national deployment are identified: counter-drugs, counter-terrorism, and counter-insurgency. Army contingencies (including virtually every type of operation) can be confused with the joint term "contingency operations", a more narrowly defined concept.

Implications. A deficiency of this graphic is that LIC operations (especially guerrilla operations and other irregular warfare) can also be conducted across the entire spectrum of war, not solely on the "left hand side" of the spectrum. LIC operations are separated form conventional operations at the regional and global level.

Figure 4: Continuum of Military Operations

Interpretation. This graphic show the use of force over time in a theater. Over time a scenario can evolve (deteriorate) from peaceful competition to hostilities short of war, to total warfare. different types of operations and forces are needed as the situation changes.

Implications. It is not clear in this graphic if LIC operations (hostilities short of war) will continue to be a factor once general warfare erupts, however, some interpret this slide to demonstrate that LIC could continue during the conventional phase of a conflict. Also, it is unclear whether conventional forces will be involved in LIC operations (by design or by being drawn into them as the conventional scenario changes).

Figure 5: Operation Continuum (Modified)

Interpretation. Units participating in each level of the escalation are depicted as the crisis evolves.

Implications. It is still not clear if the conventional forces will be involved directly or indirectly in LIC type operations. It appears in this depiction that SOF-type units will deal with low intensity threats and as the conflict escalates heavier forces will be deployed.

A doctrinal development conference conducted at Fort Leavenworth in 1991 developed a definition of LIC as "the range of activities and operations on the low-end of the conflict spectrum involving the use of military or a variety of semi-military forces (both combat and non-combat) on the part of the intervening power to influence and compel the adversary to accept a political-military condition."[24] This is a good definition, but the concept of irregular warfighting is not clear.

These graphics, none of them official, represents some of the current thinking in the army on the subject of low intensity conflict. An important, yet subtle, feature of the emerging doctrine is the application of "AirLand Battle" warfighting doctrine across the entire spectrum if Army is to commit combat forces. Other operations within the traditional "LIC" area are not considered real warfighting.

Endnotes

1. See Bob Woodward, The Commanders, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991), pp. 154-155. General Powell speaks of the long term influence of General DePuy on the Army, especially in training.

2. Long, p. 55.

3. Richard E. Simpkin, Race to the Swift: Thoughts on Twenty-First Century Warfare, (London: Brassey's Defense Publishers, 1988), p. 22.

4. B. H. Liddel Hart, Strategy, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975), p. 328.

5. Simpkin, p. 23.

6. FM 100-5, 1976, p. ii.

7. Ibid, p. i.

8. Ibid, p. 3-3.

9. Robert A. Doughty, "The Evolution of US Army Tactical Doctrine, 1946-1976," Leavenworth Papers (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1979), p. 43.

10. Ibid, p. 45.

11. FM 100-5, 1982, p. 8-1, 10-1.

12. Long, p. 48.

13. Ibid, p. 91.

14. Ibid, p. 129.

15. Department of the Army, HQ US Army Training and Doctrine Command, TRADOC Pam 525-5B, "Final Draft, AirLand Operations: The Evolution of AirLand Battle for a Strategic Army," (Fort Monroe, VA, 13 June 1991).

16. Ibid, p. 13.

17. Ibid, p. 15.

18. Ibid, p. 26.

19. FM 100-5, 1986, p. 1.

20. Long, p. 91.

21. Ibid, p. 91.

22. FM 100-5, 1986.

23. NSC interagency decision, Spring 1991. Interview with Director of International Programs, National Security Council, April 1991.

24. Swain, p. 8.

CHAPTER 3

IRREGULAR WARFARE - THEORY AND PRACTICE

Introduction

Although irregular warfare is as old as warfare itself, there was little formal discussion of irregular warfare until the eighteenth century. Most of the writings on irregular warfare prior to the 18th century were incorporated in general military history. In his book, The Guerrilla Reader, Walter Laqueur introduces several translations of obscure essays regarding partisan warfare in the eighteenth century in Central Europe.[1] In the nineteenth century, the theoretical study of warfare, led by Clausewitz and Jomini, was developed in an attempt to explain the phenomena of the Napoleonic Wars. In this period, although there was little separate doctrine on irregular war, it was practiced and discussed as an inherent part of warfare, albeit not normally decisive. The two "gods of 19th century warfare," Napoleon and Wellington, in Spain and India respectively, experienced various forms of irregular warfare. Both developed informal doctrines to cope with ever-increasing colonial burdens. Later in the century, colonial warfare would develop in a more formal manner for both the French and British Armies. In the

twentieth century, European colonial warfare and cold war revolutionary warfare established irregular warfare not only as a more frequent form of warfare, but also fought to decisive conclusion independent of a general war.

The purpose of this chapter is to review a few representative historical examples of irregular warfare over the past two thousand years five hundred to illustrate the consistency of issues facing military and political leaders. The historical survey will be followed by a brief summary of the theory of irregular warfare that was subsequently developed in an attempt to make sense of an often frustrating and paradoxical form of warfare.

Ancient Irregular Warfare

In western literature, the first written record of irregular warfare is revealed in the Greek histories of war. War, even in ancient times, was fought on different levels of intensity, in much the same way as modern warfare. Much of the irregular warfare was a sub-component of regular campaigns of conquering or resistance to conquering. Greek, Carthaginian, Persian, Roman, and Mongol leaders all employed irregular warfare in one form or another - and suffered at the hands of irregular combatants, as well.

In 512 B.C., Darius, the Persian warrior king, marched north into what is now Bulgaria and Romania and engaged the Scythians - a fierce tribe that would also give trouble to

Alexander 150 years later. Although accounts differ as to the final outcome of the war, Darius faced a lightly armed group of combatants that dissipated in front of his superior conventional army (organized in a divisional structure way ahead of its time). According to the Greek historian Herodotus, the Scythians used guerrilla tactics, including a scorched earth policy to force the stronger Darius into retreat. As he retreated they attacked his rearguard and captured his baggage trains.[2]

Subsequent great conquerors of the West experienced similar challenges as they extended their empires. Perhaps the most successful of these, Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.), was as astute a politician as he was a "Great Captain." Alexander knew he did not possess large enough forces to forcibly hold the territory he conquered. His initial line of advance along the Anatolian coast was easily supported by his fleet and also had a political advantage. The coast had a mostly Greek population that was often in revolt against its Persian masters. His success was owed as much to his military victories as his ability to cultivate political support.[3]

However, as he extended his empire east through Persia towards India, he experienced the challenge of a new kind of warfare described by J.F.C. Fuller:

> No great battles awaited Alexander, he was to be faced by a people's war, a war of mounted guerrillas who, when he advance would suddenly appear in his rear, who entrenched themselves on

> inaccessible crags, and when pursued vanished into the Turkoman steppes.[4]

The noted historian, Archer Jones added a similar observation;

> Alexander faced a situation in which numerous parties of armed and mounted rebels disputed his rule and controlled points not occupied by his forces. His opponents essentially followed a raiding strategy, attacking his outposts and, except for their strong points, avoiding contact with large contingents of his army.[5]

There is little record of the strategy or tactics employed by Alexander to meet the threat of these guerrilla forces. According to Fuller, "one thing is certain, they [tactical innovations] were based on mobility and flexibility, coupled with the use of a large number of military posts and military colonies that restricted his enemy's mobility while they added to his own."[6]

At a tactical level, Alexander recognized that lighter, mobile forces, supported by scattered strongpoints to control his communication routes. But Alexander also understood the other fundamental of irregular warfare that would become central to the writings of 20th century theorists - the political nature of the struggle. After failing to forcibly control the remnants of the Persian Empire in the east, Alexander sought to co-opt the leaders of his conquered lands and integrate them into his empire, rather than simply plunder their wealth.[7]

Hannibal and the Romans

In the third century B.C., the global center of power shifted east to the central Mediterranean and the struggle between Rome and the north African Empire of Carthage - in a series of wars known as the Punic Wars. The great Carthaginian Captain, Hannibal, like Alexander, had a knack for co-opting hostile peoples in his path of conquest. Initially, he enjoyed a degree of success in Spain by allying himself with some of the local tribes who helped him through the treacherous passes over the Alps into Italy. Hannibal and later a series of Roman emperors would have trouble in Spain with irregular warfare tactics of the locals that fiercely resisted foreign domination. (Of course, Napoleon would also suffer the same experience.)

When Hannibal concluded his brilliant strategic stroke across the Alps into Italy he caught the Romans woefully prepared. After refitting his multi-national force of conscripts and mercenaries from the arduous trip across the Alps, Hannibal moved south with unexpected strength and swiftness. The proud Roman Army was repeatedly defeated by the superior tactics of Hannibal's forces - repeatedly luring the proud Romans into large ambushes of devastating lethality.[8] Eventually, a courageous and adept Roman commander, Quintus Fabius Maximus, retreated to the hills out of the direct grasp of Hannibal's legions where for months he "risked only operations of small war as cutting off

stragglers, attacking foraging parties or destroying supplies."[9] He avoided direct confrontation with Hannibal, to the dismay of some Roman politicians who derisively called him "the Laggard."[10] But his irregular tactics of incessantly harassing Hannibal's flanks, rear, and patrols, while avoiding a major battle sustained Roman viability for several years. His delaying methods were later to be known as "Fabian tactics."

Eventually, Roman political pressures forced Fabius to engage and he predictably fell into a Hannibal trap - the devastating defeat at Cannae. However, within a few months of this most decisive tactical victory (virtually destroying the Roman Army) Hannibal "must have realized that the victory foreshadowed his downfall."[11] Hannibal failed to incite popular support for his alternative to Rome, became increasingly vulnerable to his extended lines of communication, and eventually was forced to retreat after a series of mid intensity and irregular battles. "Rome did not revert to Fabian tactics but a "new middle-course strategy based upon several small armies hemming him in, keeping him continuously on the defensive but avoiding a general engagement."[12]

Hannibal also learned a fundamental lesson of warfare at his great victory at Cannae. Although he defeated in detail the Roman Army, complete victory and subjugation of the Roman people eluded him. Tactical victory, no matter how smashing,

did not guarantee strategic success against a determined Roman populace. A frustrated Hannibal recognized this stating: "I come not to place a yoke on Italy, but to free her from the yoke of Rome."[13]

By the second century B.C., clear lessons of irregular warfare began to emerge. Guerrilla warfare had shown the capability to be decisive strategically even without tactical victories. Time, patience, and determination to wear down a superior conventional force's logistical sustainment capability and general will to fight was often more important than winning fixed battles. Irregular combatants avoided decisive battle with conventional armies. Through a series of harassing actions attacking lines of communications - over time - limited objectives against superior military force can be achieved.

However, irregular warfare was not an irresistible force. Lessons also began to emerge in methods to defeat irregular combat. Success requires adjustments in strategy and tactics as well as sharp political acumen. The object of conventional war was to defeat an enemy's army and subjugate its peoples. Faced with irregular combatants found a means to continue significant resistance required adjustments in tactics. Lighter and smaller units were required to match guerrilla mobility and a series of defensive outposts organized to control vast areas of country side. This could only be successful with a political strategy that gained favor of the

people as well as organized a static defensive structure supported by mobil light patrolling forces. Ideally, political accommodation could pay off through the mobilization of militia forces to augment defensive outposts and allow regular forces to retain mobility and initiative.

Frederick and the Dawn of Modern Irregular Warfare

The dawn of modern warfare is normally associated with the rise of the European nation state in the 17th and 18th centuries. In a sense, it was a return to an age of great battles, largely dormant since the fall of the Roman Empire. With the return of great battles came irregular warfare in predictably varying forms. However, this period is known for its great, decisive battles and the introduction of modern "industrialized" warfare of professional armies aligned to nation states with political and ethnic identity.
Frederick, one of the Great Captains of the early era of modern warfare stated; "war is decided only by battles and it is not decided except by them."[14]

Frederick gained much of his fame as a military leader during the Seven Years War (1756-1763), a conventional war of old dynasties and emerging nation states. Although Frederick's military genius in the battles of Rossbach and Luethen earned him a place in history, the Seven Years War eventually exhausted the smaller Prussian state. It was during his first conflict in the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748)

that he experienced decisive irregular warfare. After defeating the Austrians in Silesia, he continued south into Bohemia - where he ran into a new type of warfare for which he was ill-prepared.

In Bohemia (in the vicinity of Prague), and later in areas further east and south, Frederick encountered "some ten thousand Hungarian and Croation Hussars that buzzed his line of march, harassed foraging parties, and striking his lines of communications in short vicious attacks.[15] He adjusted tactically in the traditional way by organizing light cavalry to counter the guerrillas and retaliated with some scorched earth tactics of his own - but neither had much success.

Frederick expressed his frustration; "it might appear that an army as strong as the Prussian Army could not hold this area in awe." He lamented the that his forces "dare not send out scouting parties, due to the superior enemy parties: thus the king's army, entrenched in Roman style, was confined to his camp."[16] A force of about 20,000 to 30,000 light infantry was the key to Austrian success. According to Archer Jones;

> They kept close to the king, captured his supply columns, and preempted his efforts to find food... so Frederick, having entered Bohemia with 80,000 men , departed with 40,000, the remainder including his heavy artillery and many wagons, casualties to starvation, sickness, desertion, and combat with the Austrian light forces.[17]

He left Bohemia in 1745 - although later he would return to fight more conventional battles in the same area - with more success with his conventional tactics.

The American Revolution

According to Larry Addington in The Patterns of War Since the Eighteenth Century, the War of the American Revolution "may be considered the first of the modern nation wars", even though its size was small by comparison to the dynastic wars of Frederick the Great and much smaller than what was to come on the European continent in the 19th and 20th centuries. He adds, that the majority of Americans who bore arms did so as part-time soldiers of the militia.[18] The American colonies were fertile ground for the application of irregular warfare and the indigenous inhabitants were ideally suited to engage in irregular tactics against the imported European style of war. In 1754, when the French and Indian war started, Washington wrote "... Indians are the only match for Indians; without these we shall never fight upon equal terms."[19]

As the Seven Years War between England and France spilled into the New World colonies, the British General Braddock arrived from England with some of the best conventional forces that the continent of Europe could muster. Robert Asprey notes;

> Braddock, however, suffered defeat in detail when he encountered an irregular force of French colonials and Indians in the forests of the

> Monongahela Valley. His force of fourteen hundred regulars and provincial were shredded by some nine hundred enemy using guerrilla tactics -- he lost over half his men and he himself died from wounds.[20]

Despite numerous setbacks, however, the British and American fighters for the most part were not to radically change their style of war - except for slight adaptations of lighter infantry and skirmishers to fend off the irregular tactics of the French and Indians.

Twenty years later, Washington a veteran of the French and Indian Wars, remained a conventional commander of the Continental Army against the British in the War for Independence. Generally, both armies fought a conventional war in the North and Mid-Atlantic colonies. However, in the south, irregular style of warfare was to prove decisive. The Commander of British forces in America, Clinton and his deputy in the south, Cornwallis, clearly understood the requirement to gain the support of the local population in subduing the south. Their strategy was to have Cornwallis work his way up the Carolina coast parallel to the British fleet's control of the coastal waterways. Then he would develop secure bases, supplemented by loyal militia. Once militia forces existed and the naval situation had clarified, the regular army could continue to conduct operations north into Virginia - without continuous harassment on his southern flank. However, Cornwallis was never able to pacify the Carolinas. Constantly harassed by guerrilla forces, such as Francis Marion - the

"Swamp Fox", Cornwallis abandoned the Carolinas and marched north into Camden. Cornwallis then defeated the American Revolutionary General Gates in a conventional engagement outside of Camden.

The next year (1781), Cornwallis again invaded south into North Carolina, this time against a more capable Continental General, with an understanding of irregular warfighting - Nathaniel Greene. Greene's force, a combination of regulars, militia, and guerrillas like Marion, now chose to emulate the Fabian tactics of withdraw and harass. Cornwallis chased Greene through North Carolina and into Virginia, where he met Greene at Guilford Courthouse. Asprey notes, "an inconclusive battle that won the British commander the field but cost him over 500 casualties he could ill afford." One observer noted dryly, "that another such victory would ruin the British army."[21]

Cornwallis eventually withdrew from the Carolinas leaving a subordinate charged with defending a ring of small outposts (100-125 men each). Efforts to recruit loyalist militia to augment the posts were only sporadically effective and most of the posts were eventually attacked and ousted by Greene's forces. Shortly, the British were isolated and chased into the main ports of Wilmington, Charleston, and Savannah. Having virtually lost the south, Cornwallis moved north again to Virginia where he sought a decisive tactical victory to win the war. He was eventually trapped in Yorktown and

surrendered to Washington. Although not the principle theater of the Revolutionary War, the southern colonial campaigns, mostly of irregular nature, played a key role in the demise of the British forces in America.

Napoleon in Spain

In 1808, Napoleon moved to control the Iberian peninsula in order to tighten his economic control of the "continental system" he was trying to impose on Europe. Spain and Portugal were major transhipment points for trade with his English enemy. In 1808-9, Napoleon, taking personal charge for a short period of time, routed the Spanish regular forces and chased the British off the peninsula, temporarily. However, the patriotic, xenophobic Spanish, with a long history of fighting invaders began what became known to the French as the "Spanish ulcer". In 1810, Napoleon reinforced his forces in Spain to 370,000 men in an attempt to conquer Portugal. Against the retreating British and irregular forces, the French were eventually forced to retreat back on their lines of communications. Wellington eventually defeated Soult at Salamanca in the summer of 1812 and the French were forced out of southern Spain.

The real story of The Peninsular Campaign was the irregular warfare tactics of the Spanish guerrillas, and to a lesser extent, the British forces. According to Gunther Rothenburg in The Art of Warfare in the Napoleonic Age,

despite the victories of Wellington and others on the peninsula, it was "the continuous drain of the relentless guerrilla war was more damaging to the French, caused more casualties, and loss of equipment, than the intermittent defeat in battle."[22]

"Only Suchet, commanding in Aragon, had success against the guerrillas, combining military action with political reform."[23] Suchet deployed aggressive combat actions but retained discipline in the ranks to prevent the plunder of the population. "He provided an efficient and honest administration in the countryside and in some ares was able to organize local militia to fight against the guerrillas. Aragon was the only area of Spain that was to be pacified effectively.[24]

By 1812, the French had committed over 300,000 men to Spain. At that time it was the largest concentration of French forces in the French Army and remained so until the invasion of Russia. Against this force, arguably one of the best conventional armies ever fielded, were only 60,000 allied soldiers. The Spanish theater seriously weakened Napoleon's subsequent operation in Russia and forced him to rely more on less reliable allied troops in his eastern campaigns.[25]

Irregular Warfare Theory

In this and other historical studies, it is apparent that despite great changes in the technological means of fighting

wars, many fundamental issues remained the same. This is no different for irregular or guerrilla warfare. The most famous military theoreticians including Sun Tzu, Clausewitz, and Jomini, all dealt with limited and irregular warfare to varying degrees. In the modern era, the study of irregular warfare as an independent discipline became more prevalent and popular. This section reviews some of the fundamental theories on limited or irregular wars and briefly illustrates some of the salient principles that have been repeatedly discussed since the times of the ancients. It is not an attempt to analyze in detail any particular campaigns or to develop new revelations. Instead, old lessons will be reviewed in light of their contribution to our current understanding of the principles that guide the conduct of irregular warfare in the modern era. The authors that I have selected to review, are not inclusive of all irregular warfare thought, nor necessarily, the "inventors" of particular aspects of irregular war. However, each contributed through writings and/or practice to advance the theory and doctrine of irregular warfare.

Sun Tzu

According to the military theorist B. H. Liddell Hart, Sun Tzu's essays, The Art of War, form the earliest of known treatises on the subject, but "have never been surpassed in comprehensiveness and depth of understanding."[26] This is a

common characterization of Sun Tzu in the US Army's institutions of learning - but his real influence in American theory and doctrine does not penetrate more deeply than the superficial understanding of his pithy sayings extracted from his numerous essays. Clausewitz remains the more influential of all theorists in the formulation of Army doctrine. Sun Tzu is often attributed as a primary contributor to revolutionary warfare and low intensity conflict in general, and specifically, in the influence of Mao Tse Tung. Sun Tzu does indeed establish an outstanding foundation for the study of all warfare and particularly irregular war, but, as we shall see, his writings are not sufficient - as no one author can expect to be - for a thorough understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of irregular warfare.

Western military theorists focus on the application of firepower, maneuver, and defensive operations in their theories of warfare. For Sun Tzu the ultimate military victory was obtained without employing a single soldier in combat - "to subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill."[27] Notwithstanding the Clausewitzian dictum of war as an extension of politics, this understanding of the non-warfighting aspects of war differentiates Sun Tzu from western theorists.

Sun Tzu insists war must be thoroughly studied in all of five fundamental factors: moral influence, weather, terrain, command, and doctrine.[28] He would consider "Fabian tactics"

as both honorable and correct when confronted by superior military force. He states in confronting an enemy: "when he concentrates, prepare against him; where he is strong, avoid him ... if weaker numerically, be capable of withdrawing."[29] Sun Tzu also believes in the offense - "keep him under a strain and wear him down."[30] - but like Clausewitz recognizes the strength of the defense - "invincibility lies in the defense; the possibility of victory in the attack."[31]

Sun Tzu is often regarded as the father of guerrilla warfare - and his influence on great revolutionaries such as Mao is clear. However, it is the area of protracted war that Sun Tzu fails to recognize the strength of irregular warfare: "for there has never been a protracted war from which a country has benefitted."[32] So although Mao is often credited with being a direct disciple of Sun Tzu, in the central concept of protracted war, Mao and Sun Tzu were not in agreement.

Clausewitz and Jomini on Limited War

The western view of modern warfare, from a theoretical sense, can be traced in large part to two theorists - Karl von Clausewitz and Antoine-Henri Jomini - both veterans of the Napoleonic Wars. Clausewitz is known most for the infamous dictum that "war is merely the continuation of policy by other means" - and his moral and philosophical approach to war. Jomini, also a great theorist, was more interested in the

more technical aspects of fielding and maneuvering great armies.

The Napoleonic wars revolutionized modern warfare in the scope of a state's national mobilization of its human, economic, and political resources to conduct warfare. It spurred Clausewitz and Jomini, both of whom served in the French Armies of Napoleon, to analyze and write long treatises to explain the nature of warfare in the wake of these devastating conflicts. Their work has influenced all subsequent study and analysis of modern warfare. As stated earlier, Clausewitz has emerged as the more influential of the two in modern US Army doctrine - but Jomini continues to influence western military thinking as well. Prior to these post-Napoleonic thinkers, Western military analysts were more concerned with "the elaboration of involved stratagems or in superficial and transitory techniques".[33]

Irregular warfare was not a significant separate field of study prior to the 18th century. According to Walter Laqueur in the introductory note to The Guerrilla Reader;

> Guerrilla and partisan wars have been fought throughout history, but a systemic doctrine of the small war first appeared only in the 18th century, by the Austrians using Hungarian and Croatian semi-regulars in the Spanish War of Succession.[34]

Many of the great leaders and thinkers of modern warfare, the Swede Gustavos Adolphus, Frederick II of Prussia, and Napoleon all took a dim view of irregular warfighting and viewed it

more as a nuisance than a decisive form of combat.

Clausewitz differentiated limited and absolute war more by objectives sought than the means employed and his basic theory was relatively unchanged in dealing with wars of limited objectives. He recognized the power of "the people in arms" as part of regular war and saw it as a means of a "broadening and intensification of the fermentation process known as war" and any nation that uses it intelligently will, as a rule, gain some superiority over those who disdain its use."[35] Clausewitz stressed that a commander must recognize which type of war he was going to fight to determine if he needed to hold terrain or strike at an enemy's main force.[36]

Clausewitz was greatly influenced by the French mobilization of political fervor into military strength via the "levee en masse." In addition, the political zeal of the Spanish irregulars impressed him with the politicization of war in the 19th century. "We must imagine a people's-war in combination with a war carried out by a regular Army, and both carried on according to a plan embracing the operations as a whole."[37] But Clausewitz limited the conditions he felt were required for the people's war to be successful. He insisted a people's war could only be conducted in the "heart of the country" experiencing a general war that embraces a considerable extent of the country. Interestingly, he identified national character, presumably a propensity to endure the hardship of the campaign, and also terrain ..

mountainous being the preferred ... as key ingredients to successfully propagate a peoples war.[38]

Against disciplined professional soldiers Clausewitz felt partisan soldiers were of little use and could be driven from the field. Clausewitz pictured partisans as a kind of "nebulous vapory essence" that should rarely condense into a solid body - where it is very vulnerable - but at times that "the mist should collect at some points into denser masses, and form threatening clouds from which now and again a formidable flash of lightening may burst forth."[39]

The most important counter-irregular combat for Clausewitz was to protect vulnerable lines of communications and rear forces. Tactical adjustments were required in much the same way commanders have responded since the ancients - by employing small units to attack partisans. The arming of the people was noted but not emphasized as very important by Clausewitz:

> The strategic plan of defense can include in itself the cooperation of a general arming of the people in two different ways, that is, either as a last resort after a lost battle or as a natural assistance before a decisive battle has been fought.[40]

He did not elaborate on the concept of organized militia to augment strongpoints of defensive outposts that had been used in his century as well as by many generals back to Alexander. He concludes in his earlier books that "a peoples war in civilized Europe is a phenomena of the nineteenth century."[41]

However, later in his career, Clausewitz began to take up the issue of limited wars more deeply. In the final book (VII) "On War Plans" the two kinds of war were to be carefully distinguished and the appropriate strategic principles for each prescribed in some detail. Unfortunately he was never able to finish it before his death - leaving much unsaid from perhaps the greatest military theoretician of modern warfare.[42]

Jomini wrote a more thorough analysis of irregular warfare, introducing a new term: the "war of opinion." According to Jomini, wars of opinion result from doctrines or dogmas which one group wants to impose on another:

> Although originating in religious or political dogmas, these wars are more deplorable; for, like national wars, they enlist the worst passions, and become vindictive, cruel, and terrible.[43]

Jomini recognized the special difficulty for an invading force to deal with a population that is mobilized even if the conventional forces have been defeated;

> He [the invader] holds scarcely any ground but that upon which he camps; outside the limits of his camp everything is hostile and multiplies a thousandfold the difficulties he meets at every step.[44]

Jomini also recognized the intelligence role of non-combatants in frustrating an Army's ability to fight effectively. Jomini recognized the difficulty conventional armies had in operating in areas of agitated popular support; particularly

when popular support was augmented by disciplined troops.[45] He also recognized the difficulty in pacifying hostile territory:

> No army, however disciplined, can contend successfully against such a system [popular support] applied to a great nation, unless it be strong enough to hold all the essential points of the country.[46]

Distinct from Clausewitz, Jomini praised the mixed system of militia and regulars to defend Alsace, Lorraine, and other areas during the Napoleonic wars.[47] Also different from Clausewitz, who felt the people's war needed to be conducted in the heart of a large country, Jomini recognized the value of rugged terrain, particularly mountains as conducive to irregular warfighting.

"Neither [Clausewitz or Jomini] spoke of changing objectives or of tactics" suitable to deal with hundreds of armed partisans or the "proper method of controlling hundreds of square miles with limited forces."[48] Both viewed irregular war as an appendage to the more important conventional decisive battles of the Napoleonic period. Both were disturbed by the distraction it could entail and the degree in which it could divert resources from the conventional battlefield.

Neither Clausewitz or Jomini recognized the full impact of irregular warfare in their day. War was characterized as fighting between large nation states with relatively equal

elements of national power. But they understood the power unleashed by the popular forces of the French revolution. Napoleon translated the popular, revolutionary political power into conventional military power - incorporating huge numbers of conscripts into his Army and mobilizing the economy to support his ambitions. Coupled with his superior organization, doctrine, and brilliant leadership, the French had an awesome conventional force. However, the role of irregular warfare did not receive study commensurate with its true impact in the Napoleonic Wars.

Mao and Giap: Multi-echelon Revolutionary War

The post World War II period (actually beginning some time after the conventional stalemate on the Korean peninsula in 1953), is characterized by some as "the counterinsurgency era."[49] Between the end of the Korean War and the beginning of the Desert Storm, the Americans, French, and British were involved in a series of colonial wars and counterinsurgencies against communist or leftist nationalists considered to be aligned with the communist block. In the 1980s, the Soviet Union faced insurgent threats in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Angola, and Nicaragua. The United States was involved in both the support of insurgency movements (in those same four countries) and in its continuing support for counterinsurgency - most notably in El Salvador.

In the 1960s and 70s, Marxism-Leninism, in a plethora of different shapes and flavors, became the ideology of choice for most leftist revolutionaries. However, in order to seize power, most looked to Mao for doctrinal guidance. Marxism-Leninism provided an excellent model for the maintenance of authoritarian power of a "workers-peasant proletariate" - Mao showed the way for poor, agrarian-based societies to mobilize the political and military means to defeat colonial or post colonial rulers.

The influence of Sun Tzu in Maoist doctrine is clear. The strategy and tactics used with such success against the Japanese emphasized constant movement and were based on four slogans coined at Ching Kang Shan:

1. When the enemy advances, we retreat!
2. When the enemy halts, we harass!
3. When the enemy seeks to avoid battle, we attack!
4. When the enemy retreats, we pursue![50]

These well known tactical platitudes are interesting in a variety of ways but are not nearly sufficient to understand the depth and genius of the Maoist revolutionary model. Mao and his most successful disciple, Giap, went far beyond Sun Tzu's guidelines for the conduct of battles and developed a brilliant strategy for defeating stronger powers.

Sun Tzu's most important impact on Mao was in psychological orientation to warfare in general. Sun's precepts on fundamentals of warfare, the use of deception, elusiveness and unpredictability, were fundamentals

incorporated by Mao. Both sought to find means for economy of force and indirect means to defeat their enemies and permit inferior forces to win. Although many of these stratagems appear to be obvious to the modern reader - it is noteworthy to note their absence in western military thought, particularly Clausewitz and Jomini. Sun Tzu also recognized, perhaps better than Clausewitz and Jomini, the relationship between orthodox and unorthodox forces - "cheng and ch'i."[51]

The popular image of Maoist doctrine is the peasant guerrilla wearing down clumsy conventional European or European-backed local forces in a cat and mouse war of small engagements. In fact, Mao had a healthy skepticism for the guerrilla fighter -- but he understood its indispensable utility *in gaining political power.* According to Griffith, "Mao has never claimed that guerrilla action alone is decisive .. but only as a possible, natural, and necessary development in an agrarian revolutionary war."[52] Griffith adds; "it is a weapon that a nation inferior in arms and military equipment amy employ against a more powerful aggressor nation."[53] Mao thought that guerrilla warfare was a means to wear down an enemy's force while building your own for a future decisive victory.

Mao understood the relationship between the guerrilla and regular forces "While it is improper to confuse orthodox with guerrilla operations, it is equally improper to consider that there is a chasm between the two." He added,

> If we [China] believe that guerrilla strategy is the only strategy possible for an oppressed people, we are exaggerating the importance of guerrilla hostilities ... if we do not put fit guerrilla operations in their proper niche, we can not promote them realistically. Guerrilla operations correlated with those of our regular forces will produce victory. [54]

Mao was clearly not a pure guerrilla fighter, he understood the role of the irregular and regular combatant in building a winning strategy. Mao's three stage strategy is a well-known model in the United States Army. It is outlined in the appendix of the manual for Low Intensity Conflict and taught in the service schools. As a brief review, the phases are as follows:

- Phase I: the organization, consolidation and preservation of forces; known as the incipient phase.

- Phase II: direct combat action, gain the commitment of the people (progressive expansion), establish home guards and militia (as a reserve for guerrilla fighters); known as the guerrilla warfare stage.

- Phase III: the phase of decision, or destruction of the enemy; known as the final offensive phase. According to FM 100-20, in Phase III "combat may approach the levels of conventional warfare and will probably take over the priority of all other activities.[55]

But this model, so often invoked, does little justice to the entirety of Maoist thinking. Mao had a great understanding of the relationship between all of the forces he could muster and the synchronization of these to attain his political objectives. He understood that in the family of war, conventional and unconventional, protracted campaigns and short strikes; all were instruments for his long term strategy for victory.

Mao emphasized cooperation among the guerrilla and orthodox forces at three levels; strategic, tactical, and battle.[56] These three levels of war are roughly equivalent to the three levels of war currently recognized by the United States Army as strategic, operational, and tactical. Mao illustrated his concept through examples at each level and described their importance in the overall scheme. At the strategic level, representing the entire land mass of China, guerrilla forces were employed in remote (northern) holdouts to divert significant numbers of Japanese soldiers from primary areas of action. At the operational level (tactical in Mao's usage) guerrilla force cooperated with regulars in the conduct of a major campaign. Often they were used to attack vital lines of communications of the Japanese forces. At the tactical level (battle level for Mao) guerrilla forces were responsible for close cooperation with regular forces; "their principal functions to hinder enemy transport, gather information, and to act as outposts and sentinels." He added

that even without precise instructions from the regular force commanders that these missions were assumed by local guerrilla organizations in the vicinity of main force actions.[57]

Although Mao has a learned and intuitive understanding of traditional concepts of military theory he also was quite unorthodox in his thinking. Clausewitz and Jomini both grappled with the relative strengths and merits of offensive and defensive operations. Clausewitz considered the defense the stronger of the two, but the offensive alone was decisive. More important than the discussion of the relative merits of the offensive and the defensive is the continuity of thought in an understanding of what constituted offensive and defensive maneuvers. The defense was normally designed to hold terrain and was relatively *less mobile* than the offensive. The offensive, normally had the initiative and brought the battle to the defenders and normally employed a much greater degree of mobility to take the terrain or dislodge the enemy from his positions.

Mao described the offensive-defensive paradoxes in guerrilla warfare as well as making the hit and run type actions an honorable act on the battlefield.

> They [guerrillas] avoid static dispositions, their effort is always to keep the situation as fluid as possible, to strike where and when the enemy least expects them. Only in this way can they retain the initiative and so be assured of freedom of action. Usually designed to lure the enemy into a baited trap, to confuse his leadership, or to distract his attention form an area in which a more decisive

> blow is more imminent, "running away" is paradoxically, offensive.[58]

The western theorists, in the tradition of Napoleonic warfare revered commanders for their ability to mass forces at the decisive point and crush their enemies in battle. The difference is significant, Mao writes:

> In conventional tactics, dispersion of forces invites destruction; in a guerrilla war, this very tactic is desirable both to confuse the enemy and to preserve the illusion that the guerrilla is ubiquitous.[59]

Another contrast, especially with AirLand Battle;

> There is in guerrilla warfare no such thing as a decisive battle; there is nothing comparable to the fixed, passive defense that characterizes orthodox war.[60]

At the battle level, however, Mao did understand decisive combat; "rely on imagination, distraction, surprise and mobility to create a victorious situation before the battle is joined (Sun Tzu) ... attacks are sudden sharp, vicious, and of short duration."[61]

Mao and all subsequent successful guerrilla leaders have founded their success on the support of the population and integrating them into their operations. For Mao, a vital component of his strategy was not just to gain their passive support, but to organize them to support combat operations at a variety of levels.

> All the people of both sexes from the ages 16-45 must be organized into anti-Japanese self-defense units, the basis of which is voluntary service... Their responsibilities are local security duties, securing information on the enemy, arresting traitors, and preventing the dissemination of enemy propaganda.[62]

As the local people became more organized and gained experience, the self-defense units became a vital part of the reserve forces. "The organizations .. are useful for the purposes of inculcating the people with military and political knowledge, keeping order in the rear, and replenishing the ranks of the regulars."[63] Mao recognized the mutually reinforcing benefit of political indoctrination and active military support. When properly blended, it fostered a deeper commitment from local communities.

Mao completed most of his writings during the 1930s and the focus of his writings concerned his struggle against the Imperial Japanese Army. His lessons were later applied against Chiang Kai Shek, but with variations for this different enemy. Giap, the military leader of the North Vietnamese effort against the French and later the South Vietnam and Americans, further developed the foundation of revolutionary war of Mao and extended its application.

Giap's strategy and tactical doctrines were also based on the premise that he would be fighting a materially superior force. Giap, like Mao, parted from Sun Tzu in recognizing and embracing the concept of protracted war in order to wear down an enemy with superior military power - but inferior moral

power. Also like Mao, Giap understood the relationship between the guerrilla and main force armies - and develop doctrine for the relationship between a variety of different combat forces. He states, "our strategy, as we have stressed, to wage a long lasting battle ... in the main, especially at the outset of the war, we had recourse to guerrilla fighting."[64]

Giap further developed his concept of integrating the two methods;

> According to our military theory ... the enemy is stronger than us material, it is necessary to promote an extensive guerrilla war which will develop into a regular war combined with a guerrilla war ... Regular war and guerrilla war are closely combined, stimulate each other, deplete and annihilate enemy forces, and bring final victory.[65]

Giap wrote of the three forms of military organizations "which would coordinate closely with one another in military operations: the militia and guerrillas, the local troops, and the regular Army."[66]

Also like Mao, Giap wanted to organize the local populations and have them commit to the cause both politically and militarily. He extended the definition of the modern combatant to include the heroics of little girls: "nobody can forget the picture of a mountain girl who threw herself in front of an enemy bulldozer which was destroying her village to build a strategic road; the image of a South Vietnamese girl, who with her body, prevented the enemy cannon from

shelling her village"[67] He adds; "every commune had its fortified village, every district had its regional troops fighting under the command of the local branches of the party, in liaison with regular forces in order to wear down and annihilate enemy forces."[68]

Giap instinctively recognized the failure of the US Army to reconcile its tactics and strategy. "Tactics are not separable from strategy, as everyone knows. If strategy becomes defensive and deadlocked, it will affect tactics sharply and adversely." The Americans relied on the power of bases, weapons, and firepower - when their use became limited, tactics become ineffective and fail.[69]

Giap's operational methods of war paralleled his organizational structure: guerrilla warfare, mobile warfare and positional warfare - and preferred the offensive activity as the "most essential."[70] The forces had a symbiotic relationship to one another - "the guerrilla forces created conditions for the growth of the regional troops ... and the later in turn promoted the development of regular forces."[71] Guerrilla warfare was a prelude to mobile warfare of a more conventional nature.

Perhaps the best student of Giap, the American scholar Douglas Pike, described Giap's contribution to the development of modern warfare in the loftiest terms:

> It is said that Napoleon introduced to the world the concept of the modern mass army to serve the nation-state, linked to it by ideology; that he

> transformed the fighting men from the professional mercenary motivated by money to the civilian motivated by nationalism. Perhaps what General Giap and, before him, Mao Tse-tung have done is carry Napoleon's concept one step further. Revolutionary guerrilla warfare reassess the line between civilian and military, as Napoleon erased the line between professional and citizen soldier.[72]

He was one of the modern master of the talk-fight strategy in 1967 and 1968: "[it] was a two salient pincer movement, one military and the other diplomatic or negotional."[73] Mao and Giap used a combination of instruments, war and diplomacy, irregular strategy and conventional, to achieve their ultimate goals.

Che and Regis Debray: The Guerrilla as the Vanguard

The success of Fidel Castro overthrowing the Batista regime in Cuba in 1958 sparked a new assessment of leftist revolutionary strategies around the world, but especially in Latin America. In effect, a revolutionary strategy was developed "post-facto" of the Cuban revolution in order to bring a sense of coherence to what the Cuban guerrillas had accomplished and to develop a model for others to follow. The principle practitioners of the new theory were the legendary Castro and his accomplice Che Guevara. A young French scholar and "would be" revolutionary, Regis Debray helped to codify the concepts in his writings.

After Che's demise in Bolivia, the foco theory was largely discredited and to a large degree remains so today.

However, its success in Cuba was undeniable, its contribution to the Sandinista victory in Nicaragua was significant, and its influence among impatient aspiring young revolutionaries remains enduring.

Che's writings were less theoretical then Debray and were dedicated in large part to tactical and organization methods for establishing and conducting guerrilla warfare. His writings include chapters on supply, propaganda, intelligence, sabotage, training and indoctrination, and the role of women. His theoretical underpinnings, although not fully developed in a philosophical sense, are clearly outlined. In his first chapter, Che sums up the lessons of the Cuban Revolution for the conduct of revolutionary movements in Latin America:

(1) Popular forces (guerrillas) can win a war against the army.

(2) It is not necessary to wait until all conditions for making revolution exist; the insurrection can help create them.

(3) In underdeveloped America the countryside is the basic area for armed fighting.[74]

Debray popularized the theory of the foco, or focoismo. The foco, which retains its Spanish origin for lack of a clear translation, represents the center of guerrilla operations. Focoismo is the revolutionary doctrine or formula for gaining

power. DeBray rejected the Maoist doctrine of a long, protracted, political struggle as irrelevant to Latin America. His proof was Cuba and Fidel's revolution. To Debray, the key to victory was the military defeat of the power of the capitalist state, the army. He writes;

> The Cuban Revolution offers an answer ... by means of the more or less slow building up, through guerrilla warfare carried out in suitably chosen rural zones, of a mobile strategic force, nucleus of a people's army and of a future socialist state.[75]

He further criticizes the concept of self-defense units as an Asian (Mao/Giap) model with little relevance to the Latin experience. He felt self-defense zones were very vulnerable to repressive Army actions in Latin America and illustrated his points with examples in Peru, Colombia, and Guatemala. Debray also outlines a three staged process to victory centered around the guerrilla force. Stage one is the establishment of the guerrilla band. The second stage is "development," - marked by the government military offensive. The final stage, after the government exhausts itself in a futile chase of the guerrillas is the revolutionary offensive - "at once political and military."[76] In effect, this model reverses the model of Mao and Giap. Mao and Giap always held to the primacy of political considerations. A political base was established from which grew the local defense forces, regional militia and finally the regular forces. The foco theory turned this triangle upsidedown. From the point, or

guerrilla foco, local regional and popular political support could coalesce under the protective umbrella of the military might of the guerrilla. The base of the triangle, the foundation for Maoist doctrine, was at the top, supported by the new vanguard of the revolution - the guerrilla.

In conclusion Debray states;

> At the present juncture, the principal stress must be laid on the development of guerrilla warfare and not strengthening of existing parties or the creation of new parties. That is why insurrectional activity is today the number one political activity.[77]

Che and Debray underestimated the importance of political preparation of the population prior to launching guerrilla operations. In this sense the foco theory is critically flawed. Nevertheless, the success of Fidel and the romanticism of the bearded guerrilla remained a dynamic image in much of Latin America and contributed to the demise of the unsuccessful Leninist approach of workers and party vanguards in the cities. It moved guerrillas into the country side where they enjoyed a great deal of success in many parts of Latin America although ultimate victory alluded most of them. Only the Sandinistas prevailed - by combining the doctrines of many revolutionaries in formulating a winning strategy to topple the Samoza regime.

Summary of Irregular Warfare

It is difficult and risky to summarize twenty five hundred years of warfare. However, certain constant characteristics can be identified for irregular warfare. At approximately the same time in history - both in the East (Sun Tzu circa 450 B.C.) and in the West (Herodotus around 500 B.C.) - the formal study of war was evolving. Irregular warfare was a part of the study of war from the start. Even in ancient times, distinct characteristics of the Eastern and Western concept of war was apparent and to some degree has persisted into the modern era. From the Eastern practitioners and theoreticians irregular warfare was always viewed as a legitimate, honorable and, at times, preferable style of war. It was mixed with conventional war as it suited the advantage of the military leader. In the West, irregular warfare was used to a certain degree by all the major peoples - but it was never fully recognized as equal to decisive conventional battle.

Despite differences between East and West - the fundamental nature of irregular warfare remained similar and was recognized as a different challenge for military and political leaders. The most fundamental distinguishing characteristics of irregular war at the operational level, can be summarized as the following:

- Irregular war is employed by weaker forces against stronger

- It employs part time, not fully professional, combatants as principle fighters; i.e.; militia, partisans, guerrillas, etc.

- It avoids decisive combat with professional troops

- It is founded on protracted campaigns and quick battles

- It seeks to integrate active civilian support of people in military, as well as logistics and intelligence.

In contrast, modern conventional war (including AirLand Battle) seeks decisive battle against the enemy's forces, avoids protracted campaigns, and isolates the civilian populace from the battlefield. Its objectives are to gain and hold terrain or to decisively defeat the combat power of the enemy force. The combatants are almost exclusively uniformed, structured, full time professional soldiers.

These fundamental differences in the nature of irregular warfare has caused the development of a distinct - if not always formally designed - operational doctrine that has been remarkable consistent over the history of war. This evolution may be loosely referred to as an operational art of irregular warfare.

For the purposes of this study, I have identified three operational styles of irregular warfare. Certainly many more can be identified - and none are pure applications of the

description. However, by establishing some major groupings, the overall operational art begins to take a batter focus. The three styles are: the Fabian delay, the guerrilla vanguard, and the multi-echelon war.

The Fabian delay, takes its name from the Roman antagonist of Hannibal. It includes his famous harassing techniques as well as the type campaigns mounted by the Austrians against Frederick in the War of Succession - and the raiding campaigns fought by the American revolutionary General Nathaniel Greene. The Fabian delay seeks to avoid decisive combat and to wear down the enemy with a raiding strategy against his troops or logistics to the point he withdraws from an area. It is generally a defensive concept and has no illusion of a great victory against enemy forces. It does not seek to gain or retain key terrain. It is clearly a protracted campaign, and may entail a combination of regular and irregular soldiers; but the tactical deployment of troops is almost always irregular.

The Guerrilla vanguard takes its name from the rhetoric of Che Guevara and the scholar Regis DeBray. The guerrilla vanguard has more ambitious aims than its cousin, the Fabian delay. It is more offensive in nature and is often associated with a radical transformation of a society or government, or revolutionary in nature. (The Fabian delay seeks to retain the status quo and oust an invader.) By politically mobilizing the people and demoralizing the enemy Army, the

guerrilla vanguard seeks eventually to defeat the enemy Army in detail with its guerrilla force. The most famous successful proponents of this concept are Castro in Cuba - and to a lesser degree - the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. The Sandinistas also developed a much broader political base than a pure foco theory may prescribe - but their operational concept remained true to the guerrilla vanguard. The Salvadoran guerrillas also attempted to use this operational concept to first defeat, then attrit and discredit the US-backed Salvadoran Army.

The final operational category for this paper is the multi-echelon war. The proponents of this strategy are Mao and Giap. Both masterfully combined the use of irregular and regular forces, and regular and irregular campaigns to achieve their objectives. They both employed at least three different types of combatants - the local guerrilla, regional forces, and a regular Army. In addition to multiple types of combatants, this method also employs multiple operational concepts including raiding, persisting, combat, and logistics strategies (to be discussed further in Chapter 5). Multi-echelon war may take the form of regular warfare during the final campaign and especially in the end - if conditions are favorable. However, I include it in irregular warfare grouping due to the extensive use of irregular combatants, irregular tactics, and its protracted, political nature.

In addition to irregular warfare concepts, counter-irregular warfare concepts began to take shape in the earliest years of warfare. Lightly armed, small unit operations were most effective against illusive irregular combatants. In addition, the importance of the political element of persuasion or "co-option" was effective in certain areas. The use of irregular forces, normally part time militia in local defensive roles, also was shown to be an effective force multiplier. They were often used to support regular forces to maintain control of large rural areas. Although counter-irregular warfare concepts are the topic of the next chapter, two operational concepts clearly evolved. The first is the "scorched earth" campaign of brutal repression of all forms of resistance and the use of discriminate and indiscriminate force against the population. The other, involved the political "co-option" of the region through as combination of military action and political concession or integration. These common threads will be seen repeatedly as concepts of counter-irregular warfare are developed in the modern era.

Endnotes

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