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Counterguerilla Operations



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Preface

“This is another type of war new in its intensity, ancient in its origins — war by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins; war by ambush instead of by combat; by infiltration, instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him...it requires in those situations where we must counter it. ..a whole new kind of strategy, a wholly different kind of force, and therefore a new and wholly different kind of military training.”

John F. Kennedy, 1962

The aims, objectives, and methods of guerrilla warfare differ greatly from those of conventional warfare. To be successful in countering this type of war, the planners of counter guerrilla operations must understand the enemy and the unique environment in which he operates.

This manual provides commanders and staffs of brigade elements and below with concepts and doctrine concerning the conduct of counter guerrilla operations by US forces in insurgency and conventional conflict environments. It provides a general overview of US counterinsurgency strategy and the impact that strategy has on counter guerrilla operations. It provides planning, training, and operational guidance for commanders and staffs conducting counter guerrilla operations.

The doctrine provides principles to guide the actions of US forces conducting counter guerrilla operations. In applying these principles, the commander must be aware that the situation in each counter guerrilla operation is unique. Techniques and tactics applied successfully in one situation may not be suitable if applied in the same manner in another situation. The principles in this manual are guides to be adapted to each counter guerrilla situation.

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Unless otherwise stated, whenever the masculine gender is used, both men and women are included.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction**Section I. General****1-1. Overview.**

This chapter discusses the type of activity that is characteristic of an insurgency. A general overview of insurgency is provided to introduce the planner of counterinsurgency operations to the insurgent. The host government's method to defeat the insurgency is discussed, as is the difference between counterinsurgency and counterinsurgency operations. The methods of response by United States (US) forces, and the general doctrine for their use, are also presented.

1-2. Types of conflict.

- a. The risk to national survival is greatest in a conventional conflict, but the probability of such conflicts occurring is relatively low. On the other hand, the risk to national survival is not as great in a counterinsurgency conflict, but the probability of these types of conflicts occurring is much greater.
- b. Conventional conflicts imply a state of open belligerency between nations and a direct confrontation of their armed forces. An insurgency implies a situation where a country is threatened by an internal attempt, frequently assisted by external support, to overthrow the legitimate government. Counterinsurgency situations faced by US forces are likely to occur in an insurgency environment, but may also occur in conventional conflict environments. Counterinsurgency operations in support of a conventional conflict (such as the partisan operations that occurred behind German lines during World War II) are discussed in Chapter 4.

Section II. Insurgency**1-3. Concept.**

- a. The concept of resistance applies to an organized effort by some portion of the civil population of a country to resist, oppose, or overthrow the existing government. Many of the methods of resistance are part of the stock-in-trade of revolutionary activity. There can be **no revolution** without a resistance movement, but there can be a resistance movement without a revolution when the objectives of the resisters do not envision a reallocation of power.

- b. This concept applies to an organized insurgent movement that seeks to overthrow the established government. In this manner, an insurgent organization can be considered a type of resistance organization.

1-4. Prerequisites.

There are three requirements that must exist before an insurgency can occur.

- a. **Vulnerable population.** For whatever the reasons — social, political, or economic — the population is generally open to change. The insurgents will offer hope for change and exploit dissatisfaction with the current government.
- b. **Leadership available for direction.** A vulnerable population alone will “not support an insurgent movement. There must be a leadership element that can direct the frustrations of a dissatisfied populace along the lines delineated by the overall insurgent strategy.
- c. **Lack of government control.** Lack of government control may be real or perceived. The greater the control the government has over the situation, the less likely are the chances for insurgent success. The opposite is also true: the less control the government has, the greater is the chance for insurgent success.

1-5. Other required conditions.

There are a number of other conditions that must exist or be produced for an insurgent movement to succeed.

- a. **Popular support.** Support can be passive or active. It is not necessary that the entire population actively support an insurgency, but the majority of the population must passively support it.
- b. **Unity of effort.** The overall thrust of an insurgent movement must provide a strength of unity that dedicates those involved to achieving the same goal.
- c. **Will to resist.** It is not enough for the population to resist their government passively; at least a portion must be willing to resist actively.
- d. **Leadership.** The activities and effort of the insurgent movement must be properly directed through the exercise of effective leadership.
- e. **Discipline.** The aspect of the movement must be strongly maintained to ensure security and obedience.