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**DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY**

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**IRD 214: INSURGENY AND COUNTERINSURGENCY**

**4TH MAY 2020**

**ASSIGNMENT**

**IN NOT MORE THAN THREE PAGES DISCUSS THE STAGES OF INSURGENCY**

Insurgency, can be defined as a protracted political-military struggle directed towards subverting or displacing the legitimacy of a constituted government or occupying power and completely or partially controlling the resources of a territory through the use of irregular military forces and illegal political organizations. Pustay writes that an insurgency is “a composite conflict phenomenon which can be defined as a cellular development of resistance against an incumbent political regime and which expands from the initial stage of subversion-infiltration through the intermediate stages of overt resistance by small armed bands and insurrect to final fruition in civil war”.

Successful insurgencies usually pass through certain common stages of development, but not all insurgencies experience every stage of as the sequence may not be the same in all cases and the evolution of any stage may extend over a long period of time. An insurgency may take decades to start, mature and finally succeed. The stages of an insurgency include:

**Preinsurgency stage**

This is the initial stage of insurgency where the conflict is still hard to detect because most activities are secretive and its presence is yet to be felt. The actions conducted during this stage can be dismissed as non-violent as most times, the government response is minimal and little to no attention is paid to the rising insurgents. An insurgency movement is just organizing or preparing itself during this period of insurgency.

Furthermore, Leadership is beginning to emerge in response to domestic grievances or outside influences. Organizational actions are taken where the insurgents build infrastructures, recruit and train guerillas, gather supplies and look for domestic and international support. Through these, they are establishing a group identity and preparing for battle.

In this stage of insurgency, the immediate action of the government is crucial and will determine if the movement will develop into and insurgency or not. In this stage, the insurgents are still vulnerable seeing as they are not fully equipped or prepared so it will be better for the government to strike early. The government can either choose to dismiss the problem and not properly attend to it, which will lead to space for the growth of the insurgents, or they can choose to negotiate with the insurgents and solve the problems of their grievances to stop them from carrying on with the movement.

**Incipient conflict stage**

This is the second stage of an insurgency. This stage is not present in cases where the government has negotiated with the insurgents and attended to their grievances but in cases where the government doesn’t attend to the problem properly, the insurgency grows. This stage is where the insurgents proceed to make use of violence and it is usually dangerous for them because they are not fully strong and they must balance all their actions in order to avoid government exposure.

In this stage, they make use of highly asymmetric attacks and terrorist attacks also known as guerrilla warfare. They do not face the government directly and make use of hit and run tactics such as kidnappings, small bombings, assassinations and night letters to attack the government and in some cases, during this stage, they apply extensive insurgent political activities.

Furthermore, the most responsible and intelligent action for the government to take will be to put low level military actions, psychological operations, amnesty programs and much more tactics in favor of the government in place because although disunity is a potential vulnerability for the insurgents, they are likely to succeed, especially against a weak government. The government’s ability to do this joined with effective leadership, is paramount and will reduce the escalation of the conflict.

**Open Insurgency stage**

This is the final stage of insurgency and at this stage, there is no doubt that an insurgency movement exists. Now, the insurgents have succeeded and have moved to a stronger phase where they are able to gain enough support and have managed to defeat the government both politically and militarily. This stage, can also be termed a stage of mobile conventional warfare where larger units are used in conventional warfare mode and although most insurgencies never reach this stage, it is very critical and requires full government attention.

In addition, the government has to implement conventional military operations in order to defeat the insurgents because at this point, there is no way to make them calm or negotiate with them. This stage of insurgency will be very bad if reached in a weak government because the insurgents will easily take over the country or state of insurgency.

In conclusion, an insurgency that will pass successfully through these three stages will be hard to stop or control and that is why it is advisable for the government to be alert and not to be nonchalant in order to be able identify and stop the insurgents at their initial stages.

**REFERNCES**

Guide to the Analysis of Insurgency (2012). PDF

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