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**QUESTION; IN NOT MORE THAN 3 PAGES, DISCUSS THE STAGES OF INSURGENCY**

Insurgency is a concept or rather a term that has various definitions by scholars, practitioners, students, etc. but regardless all definitions have similarities. Insurgency can be viewed as a prolonged political-military conflict aimed at subverting or displacing the authority of an established government or occupying power, and completely exploiting a territory's resources through the use of irregular armed powers and illegal political organizations. It should be noted that characterization of a campaign as an insurgency does not express a normative judgment of the conflict. Insurgency may also be defined as a violent rebellion against authority when those who engage in the rebellion are not accepted as rightful combatants. Yet not all rebellions are insurgencies, since there could be a state of conflict between one or more sovereign states and rebel powers. The Confederate States of America were not acknowledged as a state during the American civil war. The Confederate States of America were not recognized as sovereign but as hostile forces.

Using the concept "insurgency" reflects the political motive of those engaged in an insurgency. Insurgencies vary when it comes to using techniques and processes. In an article published in 2004, Robert Tomes spoke of four elements that "usually involve an insurgency": cellular networks that maintain secrecy, terrorism used to foster insecurity among the population and push them to the insurgents for defense, multifaceted attempts to cultivate support among the general population, often by undermining the Current policy and the government's assaults. Each insurgency is different, influenced by conflict-specific factors like culture, grievance, and history but insurgencies also progress through some common growth. When an insurgency progresses through the phases, earlier-stage measures will remain important as will the forms in which variables develop upon each other.

The first stage is that of pre-insurgency. It is difficult to identify a war in the pre-insurgency period, as most operations are concealed and the insurgency has yet to make its presence known by using violence. In addition, actions taken in the open can easily be dismissed as non-violent political activity. An insurgent movement is beginning to organize leadership during this time, and the insurgents are developing a grievance and group identity, starting to recruit and train members, and stockpiling weapons and supplies. Insurgent organizers can use historical, social, political or economic circumstances that generate resentment among a segment of the population to support their campaign by rallying. During the pre-insurgency stage, insurgents recognize and publicize a grievance that they can rally around. Insurgents attempt to construct a convincing tale, the story of a party to an armed conflict used to justify its acts to achieve legitimacy and popularity among the populations concerned. Most insurgents attempt to construct a group identity that distinguishes the group from the national identity and creates a dynamic of the conflict "us versus them. During the pre-insurgency stage, the first signs of insurgent recruitment and training can emerge

The second stage is the incipient stage of a conflict. A war reaches the incipient stage of conflict when the insurgents start using aggression. Such initial attacks also send analysts the first notice of the potential for an insurgency. However, the target government also dismisses insurgent acts as the work of rebels, criminals or terrorists, raising the likelihood of punitive measures being adopted by the government. The initial step is the most dangerous for insurgents; they made their presence known by initial attacks, but they are still small and organized. An incipient insurgency must balance the need for attacks to demonstrate its feasibility, to publicize its cause, to mobilize supporters and to provoke overreaction by the government while restricting its visibility to the security forces. An ideal insurgent leader displays charisma, versatility in balancing ideology with the need to be inclusive and exploit local grievances, and the ability to create loyalty and sustain unity among groups. Insurgents typically rely on civilians to provide food, medicine, shelter or intelligence either voluntarily or under pressure. Insurgents must find sources of resources that the civilian population can’t access, including weapons, ammunition, and other military equipment. The causes of the insurgency and the elements of eventual resolution may mainly be political but the security forces, military, police, and intelligence, play a critical role in suppressing the insurgency and protecting the population.

The third stage is the open insurgency stage, there’s no question that the government is facing an insurgency at this point. Politically, the rebels are openly questioning state authority and seeking to maintain power over the region. Military attacks are being carried out more regularly by the insurgents, which are likely to have become more militant, violent and sophisticated and involve more fighters. If the insurgency becomes more successful, it is possible that international support for the belligerents will become more apparent, if it exists. Insurgents can create a "shadow government" that resembles state administrative structures and may set up "no-go" areas where members of government have been forced out and where only large security forces may operate. On the military front, rebels are carrying out more regular attacks, usually using techniques of insurgency and guerrilla warfare, including hit and run assaults on military and police units, ambushes, assassinations, etc. The government's most important job after an insurgency has reached that stage is to restore stability. Unless the armed forces will secure the population from rebellion Persons are unlikely to knowingly endorse government bullying and reprisals.

Finally, the Resolution stage. Some insurgencies slowly advance over the stages of the life cycle. In theory, an insurgency will eventually come to a conclusion, either an insurgent victory, a negotiated settlement or a victory for the government. However, an insurgent victory that trigger yet another rebellion by the supporters of the ousted regime excluded from the new government. The government's final fall would certainly appear to have been swift in retrospect, but the signs of imminent insurgent victory can be hard to see when they occur. Moreover, the possibility of renewed violence – either by the original insurgent organization protesting alleged duplicity of government or by splinter groups unsatisfied with the terms of the settlement – is likely to continue for several years after fighting has officially ended. A victory for the government is likely to be a protracted phase characterized by a steady decline in violence as the insurgents lose military resources, foreign assistance and public support. For years, low-level violence can continue, and without a climatic final battle, the result is likely to be indistinguishable.

Growing insurgency develops differently, but most insurgencies evolve along broad popular stages. Overall, an insurgency that survives its emergence as an armed challenger and retains some degree of competence always goes through a phase of development as the counterinsurgent struggles to recognize the insurgent threat and establish a suitable response. Also given the initial survival of an insurgent revolt, a rapid and determined government response and insurgent mistakes will drive a movement into an early decline. Many elements of insurgency have been consistent across various regions for centuries, and are likely to continue to form future insurgencies. These are; insurgency is first and foremost a political struggle. It is unlikely to be waged or defeated by military means alone, insurgents begin their struggle militarily weaker than the government and seek to avoid large-scale, direct, prolonged confrontations with the military. Similarly, while keeping their organization, leaders, and fighters secret, they seek to make their life known. Insurgents depend on the community for assistance, but not all assistance from the true sympathizers has to be or is likely to be obtained. Bullying will ensure that most of the population is compliant.

Insurgents force individuals to take sides and seek to incite counterinsurgents to commit abuses that turn the neutral population against the insurgents and solidify supporters' allegiance. In order to defeat an external counterinsurgent, the rebels need only break the political will of the intervening nation, not military kill it

**References.**

* Guide to the analysis of insurgency by the US government.
* Wikipedia.