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Assignment:

In not more than 3 pages, discuss the stages of Insurgency?

Before we get into the stages of insurgency, we will first review briefly on Insurgency; definition, types, scopes and characteristics, maybe the history of it too. Insurgency is a widely known concept in international relations. This also means that, as a concept it doesn’t have a particular definition that is accepted generally.

Insurgency, as defined by the US government in the book *Guide to Analysis of Insurgency (2012),* is a protracted political-military struggle directed toward 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*.*

Insurgency can also be said to be asymmetric warfare because it is focused on avoiding the strength of the enemy and exploiting their weaknesses. Insurgency connotes a strategy of offensive action against that of mass force action, to tackle weaker enemies at decisive moments.

Insurgency differs from other movements in the use of violence to achieve political goals. As such this means that it usually deals with internal struggles within states. The struggles take down the political, economic and military strength if a state, breaking down the already existing government. The lesser the government power, the more the strength of the insurgents.

There have been records of different kinds of insurgent groups. They are mainly grouped or defined based on their aim, mode of operation and structure. According to Christopher Clapham (), he categorized them based on their aim. They are; Liberalism movement (this deals with a movement based on the mistrust of the government of a state leading to political changes; equality before the law…etc), Separatist (kind of like how a particular part of a state wants to secede), Reformist (their view on the state is misguided and they want to change it to the best suitable ones, and lastly Warlords.

An insurgent group cannot be identified if some of these features are missing

* They must have popular support
* They must create a condition for change in the government
* They operate from the periphery/sidelines
* They must be different from revolutionaries by their goals.

Insurgency takes different dimensions; virtual, spiritual, international, military and so on. An important factor to note is that insurgency is different from civil wars, terrorism or rise of militants. Though an insurgency can take the form of terrorism, it doesn’t go vice versa

Insurgency takes three major stages to be done.

* Organization, Consolidation and Preservation of Base Areas
* Guerrilla Warfare
* Decision

The first stage involves their establishment of first base. They are mostly found in communities that have lesser chances of being watched by the government. Most of them force the members there to keep quiet which may tarnish their support from the public or some maybe that they had helped in the past or seen a similarity in them. Understand that, these insurgents have more than one camp in more than one or two states. Take the Boko Haram that started their operations in 2011, before then they must have had some special places for their recruiting of members to their cause, weaponry and financial support.

The second stage is the peskiest stage for any state; guerilla warfare. This involves engagement in or the activities involved in a war fought by small groups of irregular soldiers against typically larger regular forces. The next phase involves the use of military means to heightened political effect, isolated attacks are planned- which are meant to serve a political purpose and to forward their propaganda. The aim is to put a fear of safety in the otherwise comfortable officials as well as gather attention.

The third and last stage involves an all-out war against the government, it may begin with the militia taking up arms against a small government structure to gather resources, killing informants, looting weapons cache etc. This would result in the emergence of military objectives as well as encourage more people to take up arms. This would result in the buildup of a massive military force eventually taking over the country.

# References

Morhan, A. (2016, January 1st). *What are the Stages of Insurgency.* Retrieved from Quora: https://www.quora.com/What-are-the-three-stages-of-insurgency