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**QUESTION: I**n not more than three pages, discuss the tactics employed in counter-insurgency operations.

Tactics is defined as immediate interventions and they differ from strategy because they encompass an action aimed at achieving a goal while strategy makes use of set of motions used to achieve overall objectives. Counter-insurgency operations include various facets such as: military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken to overcome insurgency. Research has it that tactics involves a military science which deals with accomplishing objectives set by strategy.

However, counter-insurgency operation involves an accomplished defeat on an insurgency in order to achieve unity of effort along several lines of effort and also to increase the legitimacy of the Host Nation government. The said operations are considered to be an association of offensive, defensive and stability operations.

1. **OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS**

This refers to combat operations controlled to overcome and destroy enemy forces, seize terrain resources and population centers. In the cause of an insurgency, offensive operations aim at destroying the guerrilla, underground or leader in order to establish a safe environment of the rule of law and economic development.

1. **DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS**

This is carried out to defeat an enemy attack, economize forces and develop a requisite favorable for offensive or stability operations. In the case of an insurgency, the aim of protecting the population, key sites, key personnel and protecting counter-insurgent forces is strictly adhered to.

1. **STABILITY OPERATIONS**

The core stability tasks may serve as lines of effort or simply as guideposts to ensure a large joint struggle. The tasks involved are: support to government, establish civil control, civil security and so on.

Furthermore, counter-insurgencies are political and military operations aimed at containing and defeating insurgencies. Violent and nonviolent tactics are used to accomplish an insurgency objective. There are several tactics employed in counter-insurgency such as population control, the “ink spot” strategy, air operations and public diplomacy.

* POPULATION CONTROL TACTIC

This involves relocating populations away from the influence of insurgents although this has proved unpopular and unsuccessful.

* THE “INK SPOT” STRATEGY TACTIC

This involves concentrating actions on one area and gradually expanding counter-insurgency operations. The ‘ink spot’ strategy failed for British forces in Afghanistan’s Helmand Province due to limited troop numbers and a reliance on Afghan support.

* PUBLIC DIPLOMACY TACTIC

This aims to strengthen ties with local populations, therefore reducing support for insurgencies. Public diplomacy has proved to be the most successful counter-insurgency tactic with success in Malaya, Burma and Afghanistan.

* AIR OPERATIONS TACTIC

Counter-insurgency air operations involve reconnaissance, air tracks and transportation of troops and supplies. The success of air operations relies on the support of populations and counter-insurgency forces. Although wars involving non-state actors have occurred in Iraq, Afghanistan, Vietnam and Syria amongst others, counter-insurgency operations remain largely unsuccessful in achieving their overall political aims of defeating insurgencies.

Moreover, there are three general tactics available to insurgents who make use of violence- terrorism, Guerilla tactics, sabotage/conventional tactics and criminal activity. The term ‘guerilla’ is coined from a Spanish word for **little war.** It is made up of small groups carrying out purposeful attacks on a large government. They make use of the process of “**hit and run or kill**”. Targets of violence can be anything insurgents adjudge to be an obstacle to their cause. As a result, violent tactics are: Ambushes, Assassination, Arson, Bombing and high explosives; Chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear weapons, Hijacking and skyjacking, Hostage taking, Indirect fire, Kidnapping, Raids or attacks on facilities, Sabotage and Seizure. It is also vividly observed that guerilla tactics stress emphasis on raids, snipers, rocket and mortars attacks etc to support or overthrow opposition. Besides, nonviolent tactics in conjunction with violent tactics are used by successful insurgents. Subversion and propaganda are the most dominant forms of nonviolent warfare. They include: demonstrations, hoaxes, strikes, denial and deception and infiltration.

In conclusion, in order to comprehend what is written above, the purpose of the involvement of tactics in counter-insurgency is based on the lessons learned from historic counter-insurgency war but reducing the possibility of winning individual battles within it.

**REFRERENCES**

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