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QUESTION: IN NOR MORE THAN THREE PAGES DISCUSS THE TACTICS EMPLOYED IN COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS

It is a globally known fact, that the Barrack administration invented an international security situation that can only be described as complex and controversial. It is a situation in which the United States is actively engaged in the form of global Counter-Proliferation, Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Insurgency strategies. Of all the fore mentioned, it is Counter-Insurgency that has featured prominently in recent years, shaping the public appeal. In November 2008, Iraq and the United States signed a status of forces agreement according to which US troops were to evacuate Iraq by the end of 2011. On the other hand, the Counter-Insurgency campaign in Afghanistan is to be intensified in the form of a ‘surge’ in military and political efforts.

Counter-Insurgency will remain at the center of political debate globally, but what exactly is this concept all about? This essay will offer some in depth reflection on Counter-Insurgency and the tactics employed in Counter-Insurgency operations. Counter-Insurgency can be defined as tactics and strategies used to quell the effects of insurgent attacks. A counter-insurgency or counterinsurgency (COIN) is defined by the United States Department of State as "comprehensive civilian and military efforts taken to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes”. An insurgency is a rebellion against a constituted authority when those taking part in the rebellion are not recognized as belligerents. It is "the organized use of subversion and violence to seize, nullify or challenge political control of a region. As such, it is primarily a political struggle, in which both sides use armed force to create space for their political, economic and influence activities to be effective." Counter-insurgency campaigns of duly-elected or politically recognized governments take place during war, occupation by a foreign military or police force, and when internal conflicts that involve subversion and armed rebellion occur. The most effective counterinsurgency campaigns "integrate and synchronize political, security, economic, and informational components that reinforce governmental legitimacy and effectiveness while reducing insurgent influence over the population. COIN strategies should be designed to simultaneously protect the population from insurgent violence; strengthen the legitimacy and capacity of government institutions to govern responsibly and marginalize insurgents politically, socially, and economically."

The general consensus to defeat insurgency is said to be the hearts and mind campaign according to some scholars. How should a Counter-Insurgency then tackle an insurgency? Max Manwaring argues that all insurgencies demonstrate ‘analytical commonalities at the strategic and high operational levels’ and should strive to achieve 6 core objectives: defend their legitimacy and sole authority, destroy the insurgents, achieve unity of effort, develop reliable intelligence and propaganda services, deny the insurgents of their sources of internal and external support and elicit a foreign intervention. The Counter-Insurgents should make it their main aim to severe the external and internal supports given to insurgent groups. Counter-Insurgent strategies should have different ranges to cover all specters (Economic, Spiritual, Military, Political, etc.) that may not be employed at once but at different stages of the conflict. The range of interaction strategies vary due to certain factors like time and location of the interaction with insurgents or the command(s) given to Counter-Insurgent groups by the higher ups (Government, Commanders, Generals, etc.)

The elements of COIN vary and the first to be discussed is the Political Dimension (or the imperative of ‘governance’). This particular dimension is very important in combating insurgent groups. Every action taken has significant impact and this goes to show the importance of political trajectory. A lack of political focus can distort the efforts to tackle insurgents as was the case in the Algerian war (1954-1962) where there was lack of control over the military. The second is the diplomatic element (or the imperative of ‘outside’ support). Since external and internal support have been identified as the foundation of success and support of insurgent groups, it is imperative for Counter-insurgent to severe all support given hence improving their chance for success. The third is the Economic aspect 9 or the imperative of ‘development’) which basically suggest that Counter-Insurgent groups should implement laws and policies that are beneficial to the growth of the economy through the betterment of civilian lives. By doing this the grievances of citizens are less leaving little problems for the insurgent groups to leverage on. Doing this alone does not guarantee success so in addition to policy making there should be politico-military actions and backing. The Military component (or the imperative of ‘security’) is yet another crucial component in tackling insurgency. Military actions in COIN campaign intend to achieve two inter-related objectives: provide a fair measure of security to those sections of the population that support the government or simply remain neutral and, in addition, rout the insurgents.

In conclusion, there is no magical or easy strategy for COIN but over time there have been certain policies that have proven to be effective in combating insurgency. It is important to note that strategy does not remain static during conflict as the policies of Counter-insurgents are as a reaction to the actions of the insurgents.

**REFERENCES**

Strategy in Counterinsurgency: A Distilled Approach. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272201460\_strategy \_in\_Counterinsurgency\_A\_Distilled\_Approach