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insurgencies employ both violent and nonviolent tactics to achieve their objectives. Nonviolent tactics attempt to achieve political goals without the use of force. Insurgent violent tactics are often accompanied by a variety of nonviolent tactics. Used together, these tactics, along with supporting propaganda, can assist in recruiting and gathering popular support. Historically insurgencies have fielded dedicated personnel to foment nonviolent action such as strikes and protests to supplement violent action. Insurgents are by nature an asymmetric threat.

Asymmetric Warfare is a conflict in which a weaker opponent uses unorthodox or surprise tactics to attack weak points of a stronger opponent, especially if the tactics include terrorism, guerrilla warfare, criminal activity, subversion, or propaganda. Violent tactics by insurgents can include terrorism, guerrilla warfare, sabotage, or conventional operations. Insurgents often use terrorism and guerrilla tactics to achieve their goals, because they do not have the capability to contest the government or counterinsurgency forces in conventional operations.

## VIOLENT TACTICS

Violent insurgent tactics are normally characterized by elusiveness, surprise, and brief, violent action. These tactics are often divided between terrorism and guerrilla warfare early in the insurgency. In Phase III of the insurgency, it is common to see more conventional

operations. There are three general tactics available to insurgents that use violence—terrorism, guerrilla tactics, conventional tactics and criminal activity. The challenge is that at any given time the insurgent could use any of them. For clarity, the term 'guerrilla' applies to any insurgent forces performing any of these four types of violence.

Although violence can alienate the population when not linked to a vision of a better life or the violence is indiscriminant, the commitment to use violence is a potent insurgent weapon. Targets of violence can be anything insurgents deem to be obstructions to their cause. Host nation security forces, foreign forces, aid workers, members of the population who do not accept insurgent claims, and infrastructure are typical insurgent targets.

Normally, organized groups of insurgents using terrorism or

guerrilla warfare use violent tactics. The differences between these two can become blurred, especially within an urban environment or where the government exerts strong control.

Although potentially nonviolent, criminal activity provides a ready source of income for an insurgency and, for the purposes of this FM, has a violent nature. Violent tactics include, but are not limited to

- 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.
- Seizure.

TERRORISM

2-100. A

Insurgents may use terrorism. Terrorist attacks employ violence primarily against noncombatants as a way to increase the population's vulnerability and decrease their perception of security.

Insurgent terrorism techniques include assassination, arson, blackmail, bombings, hijacking, kidnapping, threats, murder, mutilation, and torture. The insurgent using terrorism often targets economic and political symbols to undermine the legitimacy of the government. Any overreaction by government forces or other authorities adds to the population's resentment toward the government and turns its support to the insurgency.

Insurgents using terrorism generally require fewer personnel than guerrilla warfare or conventional operations. Inherently, these activities have greater security and lower support

requirements. Insurgents using terrorism often select targets for their political and psychological impact. Their attacks can be effective in generating popular support within one faction when used against a competing faction. They can also be effective in forcing government reaction that alters government policies to benefit insurgent objectives.

## GUERRILLA TACTICS

Guerrilla tactics are typified by hit-and-run attacks by lightly armed, small groups. The guerrilla is the combat element of the insurgency. Guerrilla tactics emphasize ambushes, raids, snipers, rocket and mortar attacks, and the use of explosive devices. Guerrilla tactics may also include assassination, coercion, and kidnapping to achieve support or eliminate opposition.

### Principles

The principles of guerrilla tactics as stated by Mao Zedong are still valid: "Enemy

advances, we retreat. Enemy halts, we harass. Enemy tires, we attack. Enemy retreats, we pursue."

terrorist is an individual who uses violence, terror, and intimidation to achieve a result

Guerrilla operations are generally offensive, not defensive, and are often harassing in nature. Guerrillas seldom attempt to seize and defend physical objectives and, in general, avoid decisive engagement. Their overall aim is often to cause confusion, to destroy infrastructure or security forces, and to lower public morale. Guerrilla harassment attempts to keep government forces on the defensive and weaken the Host Nation, which can include destroying resources and disrupting lines of communication. One advantage of harassment is that it may create the perception that the guerrilla can strike anywhere and that

the Host Nation cannot prevent it. Because of this, counterinsurgents must not only win small battles, but also win the battle of public perception. In rural areas, guerrillas may seize a remote area or conduct raids and small-scale attacks on remote targets and lines of communications.

## CONVENTIONAL TACTICS

Conventional operations are not always necessary for success; however, guerrillas may engage in conventional operations after an insurgency develops extensive popular and logistical support. When they feel the conditions are set, insurgents may generate a conventional military force that can directly confront HN security forces. These conventional operations may vary from a small regional operation to general conventional warfare. Large conventional operations are usually an attempt to obtain the strategic or operational objectives.



## NONVIOLENT TACTICS

2-110. Successful insurgents use nonviolent tactics in conjunction with violent tactics. Subversion and propaganda are the two most prevalent forms of nonviolent warfare. Although some subversive activities can bleed over to violent activities, for the purposes of this FM, subversion will emphasize the nonviolent activities that define the nonviolent nature of subversion. Nonviolent tactics include, but are not limited to (for more see FM 3-24):

- Demonstrations
- Denial and Deception
- Hoaxes
- Infiltration
- Strikes

## SUBVERSION

Subversion is action designed to undermine the military, economic, psychological, or political strength or morale of a regime (DOD). In addition, Subversive activity is anyone lending aid, comfort, and moral support

to individuals, groups, or organizations that advocate the overthrow of incumbent governments by force and violence (DOD). All willful acts that are intended to be detrimental to the best interests of the government that do not fall into the categories of treason, sedition, sabotage, or espionage are subversive activity.

Insurgents use various subversive techniques in their attempt to convince the populace to resist the government and COIN forces and support their insurgency. These techniques include demonstrations, boycotts, clandestine radio broadcasts, newspapers, and pamphlets. In addition, movement leaders organize or develop cooperative relationships with legitimate political action groups, youth groups, and trade unions. This approach develops popular support for later political and military activities. Subversive activities

often openly challenge, in an organized pattern and just short of violence, the control and legitimacy of the established government and COIN forces.

One of the most visual forms of subversion is civil unrest.

The fomenting of riots, organizing of strikes, and staging of demonstrations can drain the power, presence, and capabilities of the government and conversely increase the power and prestige of the insurgency.

Another means of subversion is infiltration of government organizations, political parties, labor unions, community groups, universities, and charitable organizations.

To increase public credibility, attract new supporters, generate revenue, and acquire other resources, insurgent groups may establish their own front groups. Front groups are organizations that purport to be independent, but are in fact created and controlled by the leaders of

the insurgency. A historic example of a front group is the Sinn Fein. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) used Sinn Fein, their "political wing" made up of political cadre, to serve as the IRA's respectable public face.

## PROPAGANDA

Insurgent groups commonly use propaganda to increase their base of support or reduce support for COIN forces. The joint definition of propaganda is any form of communication in support of national objectives designed to influence the opinions, emotions, attitudes, or behavior of any group in order to benefit the sponsor, either directly or indirectly (JP 1-02). In this case, the insurgents use propaganda to further their own ends.

The insurgent's propaganda efforts use activities such as clandestine radio broadcasts, the Internet, newspapers, graffiti and pamphlets that openly challenge the control and legitimacy of the

established government. Insurgents will search for any leverage they can use in their propaganda. This includes seeking support based on the common identity of religious affiliation, clan, tribe, or ethnic group. Additionally, insurgents often create new problems and reinforce existing problems they then can exploit. Insurgents will arrange for the "coincidental" presence of photographers or cameras where planned events occur. If the government is unwilling or unable to address these problems successfully, the insurgency can claim they will solve them.

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