

against Yen-an, the Communist capital, in northern Shensi. They took it without difficulty; the Communist Government and regular forces evacuated the area without a fight. Soon after, however, the population, the local militias, and a small core of guerrilla and regional troops began harassing the Nationalists while regular Communist units attacked their long communication lines, which extended north from Sian. The Nationalists were finally obliged to withdraw, having gained nothing and lost much in the affair.

In 1953, the French forces in Indochina found a study made by the Vietminh command to determine whether in Vietminh territory there was any area, any fixed installation worth defending. The answer was no. Indeed, that same year, in Vietminh territory northwest of Hanoi, the French seized a huge depot of trucks and ammunitions left totally unguarded.

We have indicated above the general characteristics of revolutionary war. They are an ineluctable product of the nature of this war. An insurgent or a counterinsurgent who would conduct his war in opposition to any of these characteristics, going against the grain, so to speak, would certainly not increase his chances for success.

2. *The Prerequisites for a Successful Insurgency*

The cause of most recent insurgencies can easily be attributed to revolutionary situations that might have exploded into spontaneous revolutions but bred instead a group of leaders who then proceeded to organize and conduct the insurgencies. In view of this fact, it would be wrong and unjust to conclude that insurgencies are merely the product of personal ambitions on the part of their leaders who developed the whole movement artificially.

For the sake of demonstration, let us suppose that in Country X a small group of discontented men—possessing the attributes of leadership, inspired by the success of so many insurgencies in the past twenty years, well aware of the strategic and tactical problems involved in such an enterprise—have met and decided to overthrow the existing order by the path of insurgency.

In light of the counterinsurgents' material superiority at the outset, their chances of victory will obviously depend on whether certain preliminary conditions are met. What conditions? Are these conditions a must? In other words, what are the prerequisites for a successful insurgency?

Knowing what they are would help in assessing, from a counterinsurgent's point of view, how vulnerable a country would be to an insurgency.

A Cause

Necessity of a Cause

How can the insurgent ever hope to pry the population away from the counterinsurgent, to control it, and to mobilize it? By finding supporters among the population, people whose support will range from active participation in the struggle to passive approval. The first basic need for an insurgent who aims at more than simply making trouble is an attractive cause, particularly in view of the risks involved and in view of the fact that the early supporters and the active supporters—not necessarily the same persons—have to be recruited by persuasion.

With a cause, the insurgent has a formidable, if intangible, asset that he can progressively transform into concrete strength. A small group of men *sans* cause can seize power by a lucky plot—this has happened in history—but then a plot is not an insurgency. The lack of an attractive cause is what restrains a priori apolitical crime syndicates from attempting to assume power, for they realize that only criminals will follow them.

The 1945–50 Communist insurgency in Greece, a textbook case of everything that can go wrong in an insurgency, is an example of failure due, among other less essential reasons, to the lack of a cause. The Communist Party, the EAM, and its army, the ELAS, grew during World War II, when the entire population was resisting the Germans. Once the country was liberated, the EAM could find no valid cause. Greece had little industry and consequently no proletariat except the dockers of Piraeus and tobacco-factory workers; the merchant sailors, whose jobs kept them moving about, could provide no constant support. There was no appalling agrarian problem to exploit. The wealthy Greek capitalists, whose fortunes had usually been made abroad, were an object of admiration rather than of hostility in a trade-minded nation. No sharply fixed classes

existed; the Minister of the Navy might well be the cousin of a café waiter. To make matters worse, the Greek Communists were perforce allied to Bulgaria, Greece's traditional enemy; to Yugoslavia, which claims a part of Greece's Macedonia; to Albania, from which Greece claims part of Epirus. With national feelings running as high as they do in the Balkans, these associations did not increase the popularity of the Greek Communists.

Using what forces they had at the end of the war, taking advantage of the difficult terrain, withdrawing into safe asylum across the satellites' borders when necessary, the Communist insurgents were able to wage commando-type operations but not true guerrilla warfare; in fact, their infiltrating units had to hide from the population when they could not cow it, and their operations lasted generally as long as the supplies they carried with them. The ELAS was obliged to enlist partisans by force. Whenever the unwilling recruits found the political commissar behind their back less dangerous than the nationalist forces in front, they deserted.

The main reason the insurgency lasted so long was that, at the start, the regular government forces consisted of only a single brigade, which had fought with the Allies in the Mediterranean Theater and was greatly outnumbered by the insurgents. As soon as the army was reorganized and strengthened, first with British, then with U.S. aid, the nationalist command undertook to clean the country area by area, by purely military action. A cleaned area was kept clean by arming local militias; this presented little difficulty since the population was definitely anti-Communist and could be relied upon.

Strategic Criteria of a Cause

The best cause for the insurgent's purpose is one that, by definition, can attract the largest number of supporters

and repel the minimum of opponents. Thus, a cause appealing to the proletariat in an industrialized country (or to the peasants in an underdeveloped one) is a good cause. A purely Negro movement trying to exploit the Negro problem as a basis for an insurgency in the United States (with a population of 20 million Negroes and 160 million whites) would be doomed from the start. In South Africa (with 11 million Negroes and 4 million whites), its chances would be good—other factors aside. Independence from colonial rule was automatically a good cause in Indonesia, Indochina, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Cyprus, the Belgian Congo, and now Angola.

The insurgent must, of course, be able to identify himself totally with the cause or, more precisely, with the entire majority of the population theoretically attracted by it. In Malaya, independence from Great Britain was the cause chosen by the insurgents, the Malayan Communist Party. However, 90 per cent of the Party members were Chinese, not true Malays; the Malays consequently remained largely indifferent to the struggle. The same story occurred in Kenya (if one chooses to qualify what took place there as a revolutionary war; the insurgency was conducted in so crude a fashion as to make its inclusion in this category questionable). Independence was pursued by members of a single tribe, the Kikuyus; no other tribe moved in support.

To be perfectly sound, the cause must be such that the counterinsurgent cannot espouse it too or can do so only at the risk of losing his power, which is, after all, what he is fighting for. Land reform looked like a promising cause to the Hukbalahaps after the defeat of Japan and the accession of the Philippines to independence; but when the government offered land to the Huks' actual and potential supporters, the insurgents lost their cause and the game. The same disaster struck the Malayan Communist

Party, once Britain promised independence to the country and set a date for it.

A cause, finally, must also be lasting, if not for the duration of the revolutionary war, at least until the insurgent movement is well on its feet. This differentiates a strategic cause from a tactical one, a deep-seated cause from a temporary one resulting from the exploitation of an ephemeral difficulty, such as, for instance, the high price and the scarcity of food after a year of natural calamities.

The Nature of the Cause

What is a political problem? It is "an unsolved contradiction," according to Mao Tse-tung. If one accepts this definition, then a political cause is the championing of one side of the contradiction. In other words, where there is no problem, there is no cause, but there are always problems in any country. What makes one country more vulnerable than another to insurgency is the depth and the acuity of its existing problems.

Problems of all natures are exploitable for an insurgency, provided the causes they lead to meet the above criteria. The problem may be essentially political, related to the national or international situation of the country. The dictatorship of Batista for the Cuban insurgents, the Japanese aggression for the Chinese are examples of political problems. It follows that any country where the power is invested in an oligarchy, whether indigenous or foreign, is potential ground for a revolutionary war.

The problem may be social, as when one class is exploited by another or denied any possibility of improving its lot. This has been exhaustively discussed since Karl Marx, and little need be added here. The problem becomes particularly dangerous when the society does not integrate those who, by the level of their education or by

their achievements, have proved to belong to the true elite. For it is among this rejected elite that the insurgents can find the indispensable leaders.

The problem may be economic, such as the low price of agricultural products in relation to industrial goods, or the low price of raw material in relation to finished products, or the import of foreign goods rather than the development of a national industry. The issue of neocolonialism today is closely related to this problem.

The problem may be racial, as it would be in South Africa. Or religious, as it would be in Lebanon, although here the population is evenly divided between Christians and Moslems. Or cultural, as in India, where the multiplicity of languages has already produced considerable agitation.

The problem may even be artificial so long as it has a chance to be accepted as a fact. The lot of the Chinese farmers—victims of exactions by the authorities and of the rapacity of the local usurers—was no doubt a hard one. The Chinese Communists did exploit this problem. However, their chief cause, borrowed from Sun Yat-sen, was land reform. Its revolutionary value lies in the idea that land ownership was concentrated in a small minority; a class war on the issue would theoretically bring to their side the majority of the farmers. The sole comprehensive work on the subject of land tenure in China, by J. Lossing Buck, contradicted the Communist picture of the situation,* but this fact did not decrease in the slightest the

* Buck's *Land Utilization in China* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937) was based on investigations conducted in 1929-33 in 16,786 farms, 168 localities, 154 hsien (counties), 22 provinces.

Table 22 gives the percentages of farmers who were owners, part-owners, and tenants:

Owners: 54.2% Part-owners: 39.9% Tenants: 5.9%

In the wheat region of North China, where the Communists were strongly established, the percentages were:

Owners: 76.1% Part-owners: 21.8% Tenants: 2.1%

psychological value of the slogan "Land to the Tiller." An efficient propaganda machine can turn an artificial problem into a real one.

It is not absolutely necessary that the problem be acute, although the insurgent's work is facilitated if such is the case. If the problem is merely latent, the first task of the insurgent is to make it acute by "raising the political consciousness of the masses." Terrorism may be a quick means of producing this effect. Batista's dictatorship did not by itself suddenly become unbearable to the Cuban people; they had lived under other dictatorships in the past, including a previous Batista regime. And the country was prosperous in 1958, although there was great disparity in the distribution of wealth. Batista might perhaps have lasted many more years had it not been for Castro and his followers, who spectacularly raised the issue and focused the latent opposition on their movement.

Tactical Manipulation of the Cause

The insurgent is not restricted to the choice of a single cause. Unless he has found an over-all cause, like anti-colonialism, which is sufficient in itself because it com-

Table 23 gives the average sizes of farms (in hectares) by class of ownership. In the wheat region:

Owners: 2.25 Part-owners: 2.25 Tenants: 2.05

Another table gives the numbers and percentages of farms in each size class. For the wheat region:

Very Small: 2 Small: 24 Medium: 34 Medium Large: 17 Large: 12
Very Large: 9 Very, Very Large: 2 Very, Very, Very Large: 0

The Chinese Communist figures on land distribution, based on a report by Liu Shao-ch'i in June, 1950, were these: "Landlords and peasants, who account for less than 10 per cent of the rural population, own 70 to 80 per cent of all the land, while poor peasants, agricultural laborers and middle peasants, who account for about 90 per cent of the rural population, own only 20 to 30 per cent of the land. . . ." (Editorial in *Jen-min Jih-Pao*, as quoted in C. K. Yang, *A Chinese Village in Early Communist Transition* [Cambridge, Mass.: The Technology Press, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1959].)

bines all the political, social, economic, racial, religious, and cultural causes described above, he has much to gain by selecting an assortment of causes especially tailored for the various groups in the society that he is seeking to attract.

Let us suppose that the revolutionary movement is tentatively made up, as it was in China, of the Communist Party ("vanguard of the revolution, party of the workers and the poor farmers") and its allies (medium and rich peasants, artisans, plus the "national bourgeoisie" and the capitalists who suffer from "bureaucratic capitalism" and from the economic encroachments of the imperialists). The insurgent has to appeal to the whole, and a cause is necessary for that. Since it is easier to unite "against" than "for," particularly when the components are so varied, the general cause will most probably be a negative one, something like "throw the rascals out" (the rascals in this case: Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang reactionaries; the feudal warlords; "bureaucratic capitalism"; the compradores, "running dogs of imperialism"; and the landlords). In addition, the insurgent must appeal to each component of the movement, and in this aspect, the various causes will probably contain a constructive element: for the proletariat, a Marxist society; for the poor farmers, land; for the medium farmers, fair taxes; for the rich farmers, just, reasonable, and lasting settlement; for the national bourgeoisie, defense of the national interests, order, fair taxes, development of trade and industry, protection against imperialist competition.

Nothing obliges the insurgent to stick to the same cause if another one looks more profitable. Thus, in China, the Communists initially took the classic Marxist stand in favor of the workers (1921-25). Then they actively espoused the national cause of the Kuomintang, for the unification of China against the warlords (1925-27). After the Kuo-

mintang-Communist split, they largely dropped the workers in favor of the poor peasants, advocating land reform by radical means (1928-34). Then Japanese aggression became the central issue in China, and the Communists advocated a patriotic united front against Japan (1927-45), adopting meanwhile a moderate agrarian policy: Land redistribution would be ended, but instead, the Communists would impose strict control of rents and interest rates. After the Japanese surrender, they finally reverted to land reform with the temperate proviso that landlords themselves would be entitled to a share of land (1945-49). What the Communists actually did after their victory, between 1950 and 1952, was to carry out their land reform "through violent struggles" in order to conduct a class war among the rural population and thereby definitely to commit the activists on their side, if only because these activists had shared in the crimes. Once this was achieved, the Party buried land reform for good and started collectivizing the land.

Thus, if idealism and a sense of ethics weigh in favor of a consistent stand, tactics pull toward opportunism.

Diminishing Importance of the Cause

The importance of a cause, an absolute essential at the outset of an insurgency, decreases progressively as the insurgent acquires strength. The war itself becomes the principal issue, forcing the population to take sides, preferably the winning one. This has already been explained in the previous chapter.

Weakness of the Counterinsurgent

Let us assume now that our minute group of insurgent leaders in Country X has found several good causes, some

acute, some latent, some even artificial, on which to base their insurgency. They all have agreed on a potent platform. Can they start operating? Not unless another preliminary condition has been met. The insurgent, starting from almost zero while his enemy still has every means at his disposal, is as vulnerable as a new-born baby. He cannot live and grow without some sort of protection, and who but the counterinsurgent himself can protect him? Therefore, we must analyze what makes a body politic resistant to infection.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Political Regime

1. *Absence of problems.* A country fortunate enough to know no problem is obviously immune from insurgency. But since we have assumed that our potential insurgent leaders have found a cause, let us eliminate these countries—if there are any—from our consideration.

2. *National consensus.* The solidity of a regime is primarily based upon this factor. Thailand may live under a dictatorship or a democratic system, but her national consensus—which is not apathy, for the Thais would react vigorously to any attempt against their King and their way of life—has so far always strengthened the regime in power. On the other hand, no national consensus backs up East Germany's government.

3. *Resoluteness of the counterinsurgent leadership.* Resoluteness is a major factor in any sort of conflict, but particularly so in a revolutionary war for the reasons that (a) the insurgent has the initial benefit of a dynamic cause; (b) an insurgency does not grow suddenly into a national danger and the people's reaction against it is slow. Consequently, the role of the counterinsurgent leaders is paramount.

4. *Counterinsurgent leaders' knowledge of counterin-*

surgency warfare. It is not enough for the counterinsurgent leaders to be resolute; they must also be aware of the strategy and tactics required in fighting an insurgency. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's determination cannot be questioned; he proved it against Japan and still shows it in Taiwan. But did he know how to cope with the Communists' methods?

5. *The machine for the control of the population.* Four instruments of control count in a revolutionary war situation: the political structure, the administrative bureaucracy, the police, the armed forces.

a. *The political structure.* If Country X is located behind the Iron Curtain, where political opposition is not tolerated and where the population is kept under a system of terror and mutual suspicion, the initial group of insurgents has no chance to develop; at best, the group will be able to survive in total secrecy—and hence be completely inactive—while waiting for better times.

Since there are people who dream of unleashing insurgencies in certain Communist countries—"Don't the people hate the regime there?"—it may be useful to give an idea of the extent of population control achieved by the Communist techniques of terror and mutual suspicion, of which the Red Chinese are past masters.

In Canton, in 1954, a neighbor saw an old Chinese lady giving some rice to her cat.

"I am sorry, but I will be obliged to report you at the next street meeting," said the neighbor to the owner of the cat.

"Why?" asked the old lady.

"Because rice is rationed and you have been wasting it on your cat."

"If you report me, they will cut off my rice ration. Why don't you just keep silent?"

"Suppose someone else saw you and reports you. What

will happen to me, your neighbor, if I have not reported you first? I am your friend. If they suppress your ration I will give you half of mine."

This is exactly what happened, in a city where, according to some Western visitors, Chinese Communist control was less efficient than elsewhere in China.

At the end of 1952, a European was expelled from Hainan Island, where he had lived for many years. On reaching Hong Kong, he reported that the peasants "hated" the regime, and he gave much convincing evidence of it. He mentioned later that the Nationalists had twice attempted to drop agents in his area from Taiwan. In each case, the militia on duty at night heard the planes, saw the parachutes coming down, gave the alert, and the Nationalist agents were cornered and captured by several hundred armed villagers.

The European was challenged on this: "Isn't there a contradiction between your statement concerning the feelings of the peasants toward the regime and the attitude of the militiamen who, after all, are peasants too? Why didn't they keep silent?"

"Put yourself in the place of one of these militiamen," he explained. "How does he know whether the other members of the militia won't give the alert? If they do and he hasn't, he will be in great trouble when the Communist cadres make their usual post-mortem investigations."

In July, 1953, during the Korean War, the Nationalists decided to make a raid on the mainland of China. They selected as their objective the small peninsula of Tungshan, jutting out of the Fukien coast, which is transformed into an island at high tide. The Communist garrison was made up of a regular battalion plus a thousand-man militia. The latter, the Nationalists thought, would put up no real fight. Indeed, every piece of available intelligence indicated that the population was thoroughly fed up with

the Communists. The plan was to drop a regiment of paratroopers to neutralize the Communist battalion and to control the isthmus in order to prevent reinforcement from the mainland; an amphibious landing would follow to wipe out the opposition.

Because of a miscalculation in computing the local tide, the amphibious landing was delayed, and the Nationalist paratroopers bore the brunt of the opposition alone. They were virtually annihilated. The militia fought like devils. How could they act otherwise when they knew that the Nationalist action was just a raid?

A control of this order rules out the possibility of launching an insurgency. As long as there is no privacy, as long as every unusual move or event is reported and checked, as long as parents are afraid to talk in front of their children, how can contacts be made, ideas spread, recruiting accomplished?

What is possible is terrorism in a limited way, because a single man, even though completely isolated, can conduct a terrorist campaign; witness the case of the "mad bomber" in New York. But terrorism itself has far less value than the publicity that it is expected to produce, and it is rather doubtful that Communist authorities would complacently furnish publicity.

Another tactic that continues to be possible is one used in Greece by the Communists—unsustained commando-type operations where terrain conditions are favorable.

At the other extreme, if anarchy prevails in Country X, the insurgent will find all the facilities he needs in order to meet, to travel, to contact people, to make known his program, to find and organize the early supporters, to receive and to distribute funds, to agitate and to subvert, or to launch a widespread campaign of terrorism.

In between these extremes lies a wide range of political structures that in varying degrees facilitate or hinder the

task of the insurgent: dictatorship with a one-party system, dictatorship with no link to the grass roots, vigilant democracy, indolent democracy, etc.

b. *The administrative bureaucracy.* A country is run in its day-to-day life by its bureaucracy, which has a force of its own that has sometimes no relation to the strength or weakness of the top political leadership. France under the Third and Fourth Republics had a weak leadership but a strong administrative apparatus; the opposite appears to be the case in South Vietnam today. Since an insurgency is a bottom-to-top movement, an administrative vacuum at the bottom, an incompetent bureaucracy, plays into the hands of the insurgent.

The case of Algeria may be taken as an example. The territory was notoriously underadministered on the eve of the insurgency, not because the civil servants were incompetent but rather because the bureaucratic establishment had no relation to the size of the country and its population. Algeria (not counting the Sahara) extends more than 650 miles along the Mediterranean Sea and 350 miles inland, with an area of 115,000 square miles and a population of 10,500,000 of whom 1,200,000 are of European stock.

Under a governor general in Algiers, the territory was divided into three *départements* with seats in Oran, Algiers, and Constantine, each under a *préfet* assisted by a large staff. A *département* was in turn divided into *sous-préfectures*; for instance, in the *département* of Algiers, there was the *sous-préfecture* of Kabylia, with its seat in Tizi-Ouzou. Kabylia consisted of 5,000 square miles of rugged mountain terrain, with 1,200,000 inhabitants, of whom 90 per cent were Moslems.

The lower echelon in predominantly Moslem areas was the *commune-mixte* under a French administrator with 1 or 2 assistants and 5 gendarmes; the *commune-mixte* of

Tigzirt, in Kabylia, measured 30 miles by 20 miles, with some 80,000 inhabitants.

At the lowest level was the *douar*, where the power of the state was embodied in a *garde-champêtre*, a native rural policeman armed with an old pistol in a holster on which shone a brass sign engraved with the awe-inspiring words: "*La Loi.*" One such *douar* covered an area of 10 miles by 6 miles, with a population of 15,000 Kabyles.

With this setup, the insurgents had a field day.

c. *The police.* The eye and the arm of the government in all matters pertaining to internal order, the police are obviously a key factor in the early stages of an insurgency; they are the first counterinsurgent organization that has to be infiltrated and neutralized.

Their efficiency depends on their numerical strength, the competency of their members, their loyalty toward the government, and, last but not least, on the backing they get from the other branches of the government—particularly the judicial system. If insurgents, though identified and arrested by the police, take advantage of the many normal safeguards built into the judicial system and are released, the police can do little. Prompt adaptation of the judicial system to the extraordinary conditions of an insurgency, an agonizing problem at best, is a necessity. Algeria may again serve as an example. The total police force in 1954 was less than 50,000, barely larger than the police force for the city of Paris. When the insurgency was brewing, the Algerian police gave timely warnings, which were not heeded. A year after the insurgency broke out, the French National Assembly finally granted the government the "special powers" required to deal with the situation. By that time, the police—particularly its Moslem members—had been engulfed in the chaos.

d. *The armed forces.* Leaving aside the factors of

strength applicable to the armed forces in all wars, those that are relevant in a revolutionary war are:

i. The numerical strength of the armed forces in relation to the size and the population of the country. An insurgency is a two-dimensional war fought for the control of the population. There is no front, no safe rear. No area, no significant segment of the population can be abandoned for long—unless the population can be trusted to defend itself. This is why a ratio of force of ten or twenty to one between the counterinsurgent and the insurgent is not uncommon when the insurgency develops into guerrilla warfare. The French forces in Indochina never approached this ratio, a fact that, more than any other, explains why the French could not have won there even if they had been led by Napoleon, regardless of the power of the nationalist cause initially.

ii. The composition of the armed forces. A conventional war today requires a modern, well-balanced force, with its air, sea, and ground components. But a revolutionary war is primarily a war of infantry. Paradoxically, the less sophisticated the counterinsurgent forces, the better they are. France's NATO divisions were useless in Algeria; their modern equipment had to be left behind, and highly specialized engineer or signal units had to be hurriedly converted into ordinary infantry. Naval operations by the insurgent being unlikely, all a navy needs is a sufficient force to blockade the coast line effectively. As for an air force, whose supremacy the insurgent cannot challenge, what it needs are slow assault fighters, short take-off transport planes, and helicopters.

iii. The feeling of the individual soldier toward the insurgent's cause and toward the counterinsurgent regime. Whereas the insurgent initially can use only a few combatants and can therefore select volunteers, the counterinsurgent's manpower demands are so high that he is com-

pelled to draft soldiers, and he may well be plagued by the problem of loyalty. A few cases of collective desertions may cast so much suspicion on counterinsurgent units that their value may evaporate altogether. This happened with Algerian Rifle units in the early stage of the war in Algeria; although basically sound and trustworthy, these units had to be retired from direct contact with the population and used in a purely military capacity.

iv. The time lapse before intervention. Because of the gradual transition from peace to war in a revolutionary war, the armed forces are not ordered into action as fast as they would be in a conventional war. This delay is another characteristic of revolutionary wars. To reduce it is a political responsibility of the country's leaders.

6. *Geographic conditions.* Geography can weaken the strongest political regime or strengthen the weakest one. This question will subsequently be examined in more detail.

It is the combination of all these factors that determines whether an insurgency is possible or not once the potential insurgent has a cause.

Crisis and Insurgency

The insurgent cannot, of course, choose his opponent; he must accept him as he is. If he is confronted by a powerful counterinsurgent, he has no recourse but to wait until his opponent is weakened by some internal or external crisis.

The recent series of colonial insurgencies is, no doubt, a consequence of World War II, which constituted a formidable crisis for the colonial powers. The record shows that no insurgency or revolt succeeded in colonial territories before 1938, although the situation then was no less revo-

lutionary than after the war. Few were even attempted—a revolt in the Dutch East Indies in 1926–27 and the extraordinary passive-resistance movement headed by Gandhi in India virtually exhaust the list.

The history of the Chinese Communist insurgency offers another example of the exploitation of a crisis. After a slow climb from 50 members in 1921 to 1,000 in 1925, the Chinese Communist Party associated itself with the Kuomintang, and its membership rose suddenly to 59,000 in 1926. The expansion was facilitated by the state of anarchy prevailing in China and by the popularity of the struggle led by the Kuomintang against the warlords and the imperialists. The two parties split in 1927, and the CCP went into open rebellion. Immediately, the membership fell to 10,000. A Communist group with Mao Tse-tung took refuge in the Kiangsi-Hunan area, while other groups scattered in various places. They slowly initiated guerrilla warfare, and, although at first they committed the mistake of attacking well-defended towns, they managed to develop their military strength. Membership rose to 300,000 in 1934. The Kuomintang had succeeded by that time in establishing itself as the central government of China, and the Communists alone presented a challenge to its authority. The Kuomintang, by now a strong power, was energetically trying to stamp out the rebellion. After several unsuccessful offensives against the Communists, the Nationalist forces pressed them so hard that the CCP was really fighting for its survival. In order to escape annihilation, the Communists set off on their Long March, from Kiangsi to a remote area in the north of Shensi. In 1937, after the Long March, membership had fallen again to 40,000. Chiang Kai-shek was preparing another powerful offensive to finish off the Reds when they were saved by a crisis, the Japanese aggression against China. By V-J day, the Party had grown to 1,200,000, controlled an area of

350,000 square miles with a population of 95 million, and had a regular army of 900,000 men and a militia force of 2,400,000. It was no longer vulnerable.

The Border Doctrine

Every country is divided for administrative and military purposes into provinces, counties, districts, zones, etc. The border areas are a permanent source of weakness for the counterinsurgent whatever his administrative structures, and this advantage is usually exploited by the insurgent, especially in the initial violent stages of the insurgency. By moving from one side of the border to the other, the insurgent is often able to escape pressure or, at least, to complicate operations for his opponent.

It was no accident that the Chinese Communist-dominated areas included the Shensi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Area, the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei Military Region, the Hopei-Shantung-Honan Military Region, and the Shansi-Hopei-Honan Military Region. Operating astride borders had become a matter of doctrine for them.

Geographic Conditions

The role of geography, a large one in an ordinary war, may be overriding in a revolutionary war. If the insurgent, with his initial weakness, cannot get any help from geography, he may well be condemned to failure before he starts. Let us examine briefly the effects of the various geographic factors.

1. *Location.* A country isolated by natural barriers (sea, desert, forbidding mountain ranges) or situated among countries that oppose the insurgency is favorable to the counterinsurgent.

2. *Size.* The larger the country, the more difficult for a

government to control it. Size can weaken even the most totalitarian regime; witness China's present troubles in Tibet.

3. *Configuration.* A country easy to compartmentalize hinders the insurgent. Thus the Greek national forces had an easy task cleaning the Peloponnesus peninsula. If the country is an archipelago, the insurgency cannot easily spread, as was the case in the Philippines. The Indonesian Government, which is not remarkable for its strength, managed nevertheless to stamp out rebellions in the Moluccas, Amboina, and other islands.

4. *International borders.* The length of the borders, particularly if the neighboring countries are sympathetic to the insurgents, as was the case in Greece, Indochina, and Algeria, favors the insurgent. A high proportion of coast line to inland borders helps the counterinsurgent because maritime traffic can be controlled with a limited amount of technical means, which the counterinsurgent possesses or is usually able to acquire. It was cheaper in money and manpower to suppress smuggling along the coast of Algeria than along the Tunisian and Moroccan borders, where the French Army had to build, maintain, and man an artificial fence.

5. *Terrain.* It helps the insurgent insofar as it is rugged and difficult, either because of mountains and swamps or because of the vegetation. The hills of Kiangsi, the mountains of Greece, the Sierra Maestra, the swamps of the Plain of Reeds in Cochinchina, the paddy fields of Tonkin, the jungle of Malaya gave a strong advantage to the insurgents. The Chinese Communists in Manchuria profitably used the time when the fields were covered with high kaoliang stalks.

On the other hand, the FLN was never able to operate for any sustained period in the vast expanses of the Sahara, with the French forces securing the oases and vital wells

and air surveillance detecting every move and even traces of movement left on sand.

6. *Climate.* Contrary to the general belief, harsh climates favor the counterinsurgent forces, which have, as a rule, better logistical and operational facilities. This will be especially favorable if the counterinsurgent soldier is a native and, therefore, accustomed to the rigors of the climate. The rainy season in Indochina hampered the Vietminh more than it did the French. Winter in Algeria brought FLN activity almost to a standstill. Merely to keep scarce weapons and ammunition in good condition when one lives continuously in the open, as the guerrilla does, is a perpetual headache.

7. *Population.* The size of the population affects the revolutionary war in the same way as does the size of the country: the more inhabitants, the more difficult to control them. But this factor can be attenuated or enhanced by the density and the distribution of the population. The more scattered the population, the better for the insurgent; this is why counterinsurgents in Malaya, in Algeria, and in South Vietnam today have attempted to regroup the population (as in Cambodia in 1950-52). A high ratio of rural to urban population gives an advantage to the insurgent; the OAS in Algeria was doomed tactically because it could rely only on the European population, which was concentrated in cities, particularly Algiers and Oran. The control of a town, which is extremely dependent on outside supplies, requires smaller forces than the control of the same number of people spread over the countryside—except in the case of a mass uprising, which can never last long in any event.

8. *Economy.* The degree of development and sophistication of the economy can work both ways. A highly developed country is very vulnerable to a short and intense wave of terrorism. But if terrorism lasts, the disruption

becomes such that the population may not be able to endure it and, consequently, may turn against the insurgent even when it was not initially hostile to him.

An underdeveloped country is less vulnerable to terrorism but much more open to guerrilla warfare, if only because the counterinsurgent cannot count on a good network of transport and communication facilities and because the population is more autarchic.

To sum up, the ideal situation for the insurgent would be a large land-locked country shaped like a blunt-tipped star, with jungle-covered mountains along the borders and scattered swamps in the plains, in a temperate zone with a large and dispersed rural population and a primitive economy. (See Figure 1.) The counterinsurgent would prefer a small island shaped like a pointed star, on which a cluster of evenly spaced towns are separated by desert, in a tropical or arctic climate, with an industrial economy. (See Figure 2.)

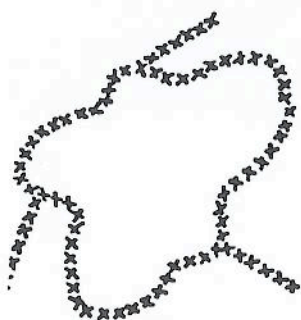


FIGURE 1

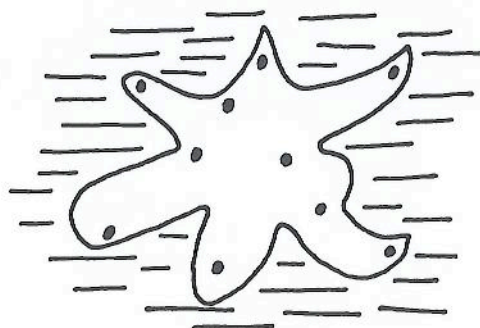


FIGURE 2

Outside Support

Outside support to an insurgency can take the form of:

1. *Moral support*, from which the insurgent will benefit without any effort on his part, provided his cause goes along with "the wind of history." Thus, in the present struggle between Angolans and the Portuguese Government, the former benefit from considerable moral support, while the latter is isolated. Moral support is expressed by the weight of public opinion and through various communications media. Propaganda is the chief instrument of moral support, used to sway public opinion when it is adverse, or to reinforce existing public sympathy.

2. *Political support*, with pressure applied directly on the counterinsurgent, or indirectly by diplomatic action in the international forum. Taking the same case as an example, we see that many African states have broken off diplomatic relations with Lisbon and recognized a provisional government of Angola; they have also succeeded in expelling Portugal from various international organizations such as the International Labor Organization.

3. *Technical support*, in the form of advice to the insurgent for the organization of his movement and the conduct of his political and military operations. The similarity between the Vietminh and the Chinese Communists' methods was not accidental.

4. *Financial support*, overt or covert. A great part of the FLN budget came from grants by the Arab League. Red China shipped tea to the FLN in Morocco, where it was sold on the open market.

5. *Military support*, either through direct intervention on the insurgent's side or by giving him training facilities and equipment.

No outside support is absolutely necessary at the start of an insurgency, although it obviously helps when available.

Military support short of direct intervention, in particular, cannot be absorbed in a significant amount by the insurgent until his forces have reached a certain level of development. The initial military phase of an insurgency, whether terrorism or guerrilla warfare, requires little in the way of equipment, arms, ammunition, and explosives. These can usually be found locally or smuggled in.

When the time comes, however, for the insurgent to pass from guerrilla warfare to a higher form of operations, to create a regular army, the need for much larger and more varied supplies becomes acute. Either he is able to capture it from the counterinsurgent, or it must come from the outside. If not, the development of the insurgent military establishment is impossible.

The Communists in China received little or no support from abroad until Manchuria was occupied by the Soviet Army; the arms and equipment of the Japanese Kwantung Army were turned over to 100,000 soldiers from the People's Liberation Army who had crossed into Manchuria from Jehol and Shantung. The Communists in Manchuria were at once able to conduct large-scale sustained operations, and the nature of the fighting in this area was markedly different from the Communist operations south of the Great Wall. Access to the Japanese Army stores was not the decisive factor in the outcome of the war, since the Communist forces in China proper, who received few supplies from Manchuria, succeeded in arming themselves with captured Nationalist equipment; but it certainly hastened the defeat of the best Nationalist troops in Manchuria. The Communists boasted that their quartermaster and ordnance depots were conveniently located forward, in the hands of the Nationalists. Their slogan "Feed the War by War" was not an empty assertion.

In Indochina, the turning point occurred in 1950, when the Vietminh began receiving aid from Red China. Until

then, they had been unable to develop their forces and to stage large-scale operations, not because they suffered from manpower problems—they had more potential soldiers than they could use—but because their primitive arsenals could not fill their needs, and they could not capture significant amounts of French weapons. Although the Vietminh could have fought a protracted guerrilla warfare, and thus could have denied the French any benefit from a prolonged occupation of the country, they would not have been able to raise a powerful regular army without Chinese aid. By September, 1950, 20,000 men in the Vietminh forces had been equipped with machine guns, heavy mortars, anti-aircraft weapons. The Vietminh command was able to organize a Heavy Division, the 351st. In 1951, according to French estimates, Chinese aid amounted to 18,000 rifles, 1,200 machine guns, 150–200 heavy mortars, and about 50 recoilless guns.*

In Malaya and the Philippines, the insurgents received no outside military support and did not develop.

In Greece, the Communist insurgents received support from and through the satellite countries, but the split between Tito and Stalin interrupted the flow just when the insurgents, having organized their forces into large—and vulnerable—units, needed it most.

In Algeria, the French naval blockade and the sealing of the borders prevented the flow of supplies to Algeria from Tunisia and Morocco, where large rebel stocks had been accumulated. No development was possible. The situation of the FLN forces after 1959 became so critical that most of their automatic weapons were buried for lack of ammunition.

The East-West conflict that today covers the entire

* Bernard Fall, *Le Viet-Minh* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1960), p. 195.

world cannot fail to be affected by any insurgency occurring anywhere. Thus, a Communist insurgency is almost certain to receive automatic support from the Communist bloc. Chances for Communist support are good even for non-Communist insurgents, provided, of course, that their opponent is an "imperialist" or an ally of "imperialism."

Conversely, the East-West conflict sometimes accelerates the outbreak of insurgencies—and this is not always a blessing for the insurgents, as we have seen in the cases of the Communist movements in Asia after the 1948 Calcutta meeting—and sometimes slows them down or inhibits them entirely, when insurgencies do not fit in with the over-all policy of the Communist bloc. This last point cannot be documented, naturally, but there are strong presumptions that the surprisingly quiet attitude of the Indonesian Communist Party today, which seems powerful enough to go into violent action, may be attributed to some sort of veto from Moscow and/or Peking.

If outside support is too easily obtainable, it can destroy or harm self-reliance in the insurgent ranks. For this reason, partly, Communist insurgents in Asia have always emphasized the necessity of counting on their own efforts. The resolution of the First Session of the Vietnamese Central Committee of the Lao Dong (Communist) Party in 1951 reminded Party members that "our Resistance War is a long and hard struggle" and "we have mainly to rely on our own forces."

In conclusion, (1) a cause, (2) a police and administrative weakness in the counterinsurgent camp, (3) a not-too-hostile geographic environment, and (4) outside support in the middle and later stages of an insurgency—these are the conditions for a successful insurgency. The first two are musts. The last one is a help that may become a necessity.

3. *The Insurgency Doctrine*

Strategic Patterns for Insurgency

Since counterinsurgency exists solely as a reaction to an insurgency, the counterinsurgent's problems and operations can be best understood in the light of what prompts them. In this chapter, we shall summarize the insurgency doctrine.

Two general patterns for insurgencies emerge from the history of past revolutionary wars. One is based essentially on the theory and experience of the Chinese Communists and was offered by Liu Shao-ch'i as a blueprint for revolution in colonial and semicolonial countries:

The path that led the Chinese people to victory is expressed in the following formula:

1. The working class must unite with all other classes, political parties, and organizations and individuals who are willing to oppose the oppression of imperialism and its lackeys, form a broad and nationwide united front, and wage a resolute fight against imperialism and its lackeys.

2. This nationwide united front must be led and built around the working class, which opposes imperialism most resolutely, most courageously, and most unselfishly, and its party, the Communist Party, with the latter as its center. It must not be led by the wavering and compromising national bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeoisie and its parties.

3. In order to enable the working class and its party, the Communist Party, to become the center for uniting all the forces throughout the country against imperialism and to lead the national united front competently to victory, it is necessary to build up through long struggles a Communist Party which is armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, which understands strategy and tactics, practices self-criti-