

**INSURGENCY:** a protracted, methodical struggle to obtain specific intermediate objectives leading to the overthrow of the existing order.

dependent on time, people (Mao: “The people are like water and the army is like fish”), cause, and weak government; not fighting for territory

external support is necessary only in final phase and thus its disruption is not a key

## **PHASES OF INSURGENCY**

[with stages overlapping and shifting]

- Agitation, proselytizing, organization
- Overt violence against government, guerrilla operations, establishment of bases
- Open warfare, conventional-style army, full-scale set-piece battles

## **MAOIST STAGES OF REVOLUTIONARY WARFARE**

[with stages overlapping and shifting]

1. Planning and organizing; convert population; small-scale military actions only (*contention*)
2. Sabotage, assassinations, ambushes, raids; build weapon stock; recruit and train; convert and indoctrinate (classic guerrilla warfare) (*equilibrium*)
3. Conventional warfare (*counter-offensive*)

## CRITICAL ELEMENTS FOR AN INSURGENCY

- Time
- People (= water)
- A cause
- A weak government

## CATEGORY OF MEMBERS IN MAOIST WARFARE

1. full-time guerrillas & organizers & teachers & leaders
2. part-time guerrillas
3. information gathers, couriers, spreaders of propaganda

## NECESSARY TO COUNTER AN INSURGENCY

- Ground mobility
- Light infantry
- Intensive patrolling of populated areas; population security
- Strengthening of government and its relationship with the people

**Purpose of revolutionary war: destroy existing society and institutions and replace them with new structure; therefore, such a war is *military, political, economic, social, and psychological***

Mao Tse-tung:

“War cannot for a single moment be separated from politics;  
**politics are bloodless war, war is the politics of bloodshed.**”

The key is not fighting battles but winning over the people; the key is man, not machine.

Guerrillas do not need the support of all or a majority or even a large percentage of the population:

Just 2% active support (or less) if the rest are neutral.

Mao Tse-tung:

“The women want to learn ploughing and hoeing. Whom can we get to teach them?

Children want to go to school. Has any primary school been set up?

The wooden bridge over there is too narrow. Should not repairs be made?

All such problems concerning the living conditions of the masses should be placed on our agenda. We should make the broad masses realize that we represent their interests, that our life and theirs are intimately interwoven . . . .”

Unless the government can guarantee the people’s health and security, the people must accommodate themselves to the presence of the guerrillas; being on the wrong side—being “disloyal” to the stronger side—can have serious (even fatal) consequences.

Guerrillas operate and fight as they do because they are not strong enough to do otherwise.

“An ability to run away is the great characteristic of the guerrilla.”  
(Mao Tse-tung)

“There is no such thing as a decisive battle” in guerrilla warfare  
(Mao Tse-tung)

To succeed, guerrillas must exploit greater mobility, have a detailed and intimate knowledge of the countryside, and have better intelligence than government forces.

“War by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins; war by ambush instead of by combat; by infiltration, instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him . . . requires . . . a whole new kind of strategy, a wholly different kind of force, and therefore a new and wholly different kind of military training.” (JFK)

“I am convinced that, even though the National Liberation Front is Communist-dominated, that the great majority of the people supporting it are doing so because it is their only hope to change and improve their living conditions. If I were a lad of eighteen faced with the same choice—whether to support the GVN or the NLF—and a member of a rural community, I would surely choose the NLF.” (John Paul Vann, adviser in Vietnam, 1960s)

The GVN “remains a corrupt, inefficient, graft-ridden collection of divided opportunists who have little interest in the people of their country. As a result of these factors, the people have no interest in the GVN and are either actively supporting the VC or completely indifferent to the programs of the GVN. Without the active assistance of the people, an insurgent people cannot be defeated.” (David Hackworth)