

## Guerilla Warfare

Guerilla: Spanish for 'little war'. Until 20th century it was used to supplement the actions of regular armies. Guerilla warfare according to Mao Tse-Tung: Organization Phase: Build up a structure of 'cadres' to organize population support ('agit-prop' teams to develop popular awareness / use of 'selective terror' against government officials, to eliminate landlords and others the population disliked, and to deter informers. Guerilla Phase: Introduce guerilla attacks and ambushes (to acquire weapons and blow up infrastructure) ? make it difficult for governments to maintain a military presence (creation of 'liberated areas?') Mobile War (Third Phase) Amounted to civil war / force government forces to retreat to major cities until these were surrounded by a hostile countryside. Facts about Guerilla Warfare: Used where to engage in conventional warfare would mean defeat. Developed in rural societies where Marxist style revolution was not possible b/c of the lack of a proletariat. Guerrilla tactics are the practical methods of achieving the strategic objectives? (Che Guevara) including mobility, self-sufficiency, sabotage? Must establish parallel structures of government Aim must be the changing of an unjust society / shouldn't be used until all peaceful methods of obtaining change have been exhausted (Che Guevara) Must have support of people. (Mao's metaphor of the guerilla fighter being the fish and the people the sea) Most movements have a middle class leadership. Why has it been the most common form of warfare since 1945? Struggle of Asian and African people against colonial rule which meant conventional warfare was out of the question. The areas of decolonialisation were suited to its use. Outlawing of war (through UN) Development of nuclear weapons meant that guerilla warfare was used as a 'war by proxy' btw the great powers. Advances in weaponry (more dangerous form of warfare) Suited with the politicization of the population The spreading of Marxism The development of the 'Cold War' Established Gov. could rely on support of one of the super-powers USSR and China used it to pose as liberators in most colonial conflicts Development of the Mass Media ? prevents the government forces from using all methods at their disposal. Examples of Guerilla Warfare Campaigns Vietnam (Vietminh against the French 1946-1954) Before the use of Guerilla warfare, both negotiations with the French and uprisings in the major cities failed. Phase 1: (had already begun against the Japanese in 1944) Established small, independent cells in remote areas. Agit-Prop (Agitation and Propaganda) teams toured villages. By 1949 Ho Chi Minh had a network in place across the whole country. Phase 2: (begun in 1949 by General Giap) Assassination of French officials and Vietnamese who co-operated with them. Attacks against isolated military outposts. Ambushing of military convoys. Giap shortened phase 2 and passed directly to phase 3 when the Chinese communist forces were successful in China. This was premature and failed. Giap fell back to phase 2. The result of Phase 2 was that the French abandoned remote outposts and left most of the country in the hands of the Vietminh. Phase 3: (gradually between 1953 and 1954) Vietminh able to attack with success enve large French army units. French decided to seek a decisive battle at Dien Bien Phu, in Vietminh territory (able to do this w/ air superiority) but Vietminh managed to bring artillery through jungle to use against the base and to cut off air support. After a siege of 6 months, the French surrendered at Dien Bien Phu and agreed to withdraw from Vietnam. ----- Cuba (Fidel Castro's campaign: 1956-1959) Cuba in control of military dictator Batista / economy closely linked to US needs and not to the needs of Cuban population. Phase 1: Late 1956 a small group of guerillas landed in Cuba / most killed but survivors led by Castro established camp in a remote region of the island and began to recruit supporters. They were successful b/c: Region was poor / lack of Gov. control. They got rid of bandits. Phase 2: Castro made use of 'hit and run' methods. Kidnapped American personnel from Guantanamo Bay base / released them but demonstrated their ability to launch attacks anywhere in the country. USA decided to ban sale of weapons to Cuba ? cut of Batista's main source. Phase 3: (late 1958) Large scale attacks against the now demoralized enemy. September 1958: rebel forces under Che Guevara gained control of main road across island. January 1959: Batista fled and Castro took over. Vietnam 1945-1975 &nbsp; Sources of Colonial exploitation: Catholic church sought to convert population. Merchants and financiers which restructured the economy for greater profits. Politicians and administration (gaining a reputation in Vietnam) Little done to benefit population under French rule. The aim was to change the natives and to bring benefits to France. Resistance to the French: Based on widespread popular support. Ho Chi Minh ? formed Vietnamese Communist party. World War II: Ho Chi Minh found the League for Vietnamese Independence (Vietminh) ? May 1941 Established itself as the voice of Vietnamese Nationalism Japanese successful invasion of Vietnam discredited the French Popular discontent at the famine caused by Japanese and French 'puppets?'. By the beginning of 1945 Ho had mass support -started raising an army After Japanese get rid of French Gov., Vietminh begin systematic harassment of new Japanese colonial masters. After Japanese surrender in August 1945, Vietminh filled the space in Gov. and Ho proclaimed Vietnamese Independence . (Sept. 1945) borrowed from the American Declaration of Independence / had American support. Attitude of the Allies: (to Vietnamese Independence) America: Critical of French rule (Roosevelt) Initial friendship with Vietnam, but agreed to the return of French troops to Vietnam (provided aid for the French) At death of Roosevelt, the new president was more concerned with spread of communism and Cold War than Vietnamese people. Great Britain: Pro-French since encouraging nationalism would mean loss of the British empire in the region. Potsdam Conference: Vietnam divided along 17th Parallel (North ? China / South ? Britain) Vietminh kicked out of South by British but co-operated with Chinese in North. ----- The First Vietnam War, 1946-1954 Co-operation w/ the French impossible: B/c of the problems of the Fourth Republic French left control of Vietnam in the hands of anti-nationalist local administrators. Ho Chi Minh had no international support. Fighting began in 1946 (French launched war against Vietminh) Giap and Ho predicted it would be a war of long duration. 1954: Dien Bien Phu captured and French agree to negotiate. The Geneva Conference: (1954) Temporary division of Vietnam along 16th parallel'general elections shall be held in July 1956'Independent status of Laos, Cambodia, Southern Vietnam. American Aim: 'prevent the loss in Northern Vietnam from leading to the extension of communism throughout South East Asia and the South West Pacific' ? Dulles (Domino Theory) Reasons for Vietminh Victory: France was 'tired of war'? French troops not prepared against guerilla warfare France had lost support (trying to perpetuate colonialism) Giap + Ho were very capable men Vietminh (after 1950) received Chinese and Russian help Terrain ideal for guerilla warfare Vietminh were popular for being the

resistance to the Japanese and French ----- The Second Vietnam War 1960-1975 and American Involvement August 1954: US National Security Council decided Vietnam Settlement represented &quot;a major forward stride of communism which might lead to the loss of SE Asia&quot;; (seeing the conflict in Cold War terms) President Eisenhower agreed to aid the regime of Ngo Dinh Diem. Facts about Diem's Regime: Refused to hold reunification talks or hold elections promised under the terms of the Geneva agreement. Autocratic regime. Widespread corruption and nepotism. Unfair distribution of wealth He had repressive policies (i.e.: towards Buddhists) He was associated with colonialism Effects of US Aid: Regime increasingly relied on the aid for support ? no reform in order to build up local support. Economy distorted Little done for mass of the people November 1963: Diem assassinated ? country under military Gov. Diem's regime led to the formation in South Vietnam of the National Liberation Front (NLF) w/ both communist and non-communists. It was labeled as communist by Diem and the Americans. Causes of the Second Vietnam War: Geneva Conference was only a partial solution to the problem. USA determined to stem the tide of communism in Asia. (Domino Theory) USA believed that communism in Indo China was part of the expansionist Chinese and Russian policies / The interest of both countries in the region was a ?proof that an anti American plot was hatching. US failure to understand that the NLF rested more on nationalism than Marxism. American Chauvinism (US would triumph where France failed) Failure of Diem's regime to abide by Geneva Agreement. Corruption of Diem's regime. ?Bipolar? view of the US which saw the conflict in terms of the Cold War. Strategic interest of the US in the Eastern Pacific. Vietnam was a Civil War (UN Charter forbade intervention) but US didn't see it so. Kenedy 1960-63: ? May 1961: special anti-guerilla forces sent to Vietnam US military determined policy w/ regard to Vietnam ? meant that a military solution was adopted to a political problem. ?Strategic Hamlets Programme?: relocation of villages in South Vietnam, their fortification and imposing of a curfew. (to cut off guerillas from the people. Disastrous b/c: Moving village to another location went against the Vietnamese religion which involved ancestor worship and the sacredness of burial grounds. Use of force to ensure cooperation was counter-productive. 1963: 16,500 troops in Vietnam. Fall Of Diem: May 1963: S.V. troops open fire on Buddhists protestors. June 1963: Monk burns himself to death in the center of Saigon. Nov 1963: Coup organised: Diem killed. Lyndon Johnson 1963-68: Aug. 1964: Gulf of Tonkin incident: US ships attacked by N.V. ? Gulf of Tonkin Resolution: gave Johnson power to escalate the war. Feb. 1965: Operation Rolling Thunder ? Massive air war against N.V. Feb. 1968: Tet Offensive succeeded in capturing US Saigon Embassy. ? Resulting in questions in the US as to US involvement Effects of the War on the US: Became a major issue in US politics. Provoked a self-critical analysis of society Power of politico-industrial complex questioned 10% of labor force defense related Congress increasingly critical of war Casualties 100,000 by 1967 Cost \$2 Billion a month by 1968. Internal programmes cut (gave rise to riots) Draft dodging. Increased credibility Gap. Richard Nixon 1968/69-74: Won election promising to end the war (but he meant ending it by ?victory?) Main Developments: Gradually US combat troops withdrawn as Vietnamese units were trained to take over. Phoenix Programme (assassination units to eliminate NLF influence in South Vietnam) Extended the war into neighboring countries 1970: troops into Cambodia. 1971: troops into Laos. The Pentagon Papers: Revealed the extent to which US Gov. had been misleading congress and public. 1972: Election year in US / Peace talks began in Paris / Nixon won elections Jan. 1973: Cease fire agreed and US troops begin to return from Vietnam. April 1975: South Vietnamese Gov. surrenders after fall of Saigon / Cambodia falls to communist Khmer Rouge forces. Why Did the US Fail in Vietnam? Failed to recognize that Vietcong and NLF had support of the majority in S.V. Saw conflict in terms of Cold War and committed itself to preventing a genuine peoples revolt against an unpop. Gov. Regime which US supported was inefficient and corrupt. Saw the conflict in military terms whereas it was political in nature. Considerable evidence of racism / little chance that Americans would be seen as saviors. Nature of terrain favored guerillas ? US response was greater firepower. First television war ? turned public opinion in the US and elsewhere against the war. Enormous cost of the war US credibility destroyed (i.e.: w/ Pentagon Papers) ? pressure to end the war. Protest movements in the US. The Effects of the Vietnam War on Vietnam: S.V. society became incoherent/divided. Social dislocation / drift of pop. towards cities / prostitution / crime / middle class destroyed / Catholics vs. Buddhists, Capitalist vs. communists, civilian vs. military / ? Economic Effects: extra load on social services of maintaining army / black marketeering and profiteering / wartime inflation. Physical destruction and permanent Ecological damage: soil erosion (i.e.: with defoliants sprayed on jungle) / homeless civilians. Destruction of Vietnam's most important source of income: rice exports. Human losses (1,000,000 communists?) Alienation of both North and South Vietnamese populations. North Vietnam soon overran the South Flight of South Vietnamese Communism spread in Indo China The Effects of the Second Vietnam War on the U.S.A.: Breach between executive and legislative branches of Gov. / restrictions were placed upon the ability of president to conduct such a war. Crisis of confidence: blow to American prestige ? for a period after the war America seemed to have lost the ability to provide decisive leadership within the Western World. Divided American society Decrease in confidence in American leaders (credibility gap) Failure of domestic reforms (i.e.: Johnson's Great Society programme) Human costs: 60,000 killed, more wounded / emotional problems (i.e.: post traumatic stress disorder) US allies rethink their commitment to the US. USA was seen as supporting colonialism USSR profited indirectly from the war Uncensored reporting of the war ? horrors of war. Effects on army: Conscriptio introduced / war morale almost collapsed / mounting casualties / crime and drug use increased within army. Led to hesitation as to whether to respond to the revolutions in Central America. Terrorism Definition: the use of terror or violence to intimidate and/or subjugate // the attack on an individual to frighten and coerce a large number of others. Types: Criminal: i.e.: Mafia State Terrorism: use of terror by a Gov. to maintain power. As an instrument of Guerilla warfare Terrorism by groups attempting to bring about the collapse of a Gov. or trigger revolution. Note: we will focus on d) Common perceptions with regard to Terrorism: ?one man's terrorist is another's freedom fighter? Developed mainly after WWII (but not only a recent phenomenon) Usually left-wing b/c going against established right-wing dictatorships. More recently: Islamic, right-wing death squads of C.A. Middle-class led Is terrorism the result of genuine grievances? NO: Most terrorism directed against liberal Gov. Doesn't seem to have been ?weapon of the poor? Idealists (i.e.: Che Guevara) No examples of pure terrorism achieving its final goals. Why It became more popular after WWII: Modern states vulnerable (esp. liberal

democratic states) Easy targets: airports, city centers Serious anti-terrorist measures hard to implant Hostage taking ? ?no win? situation for Gov. Increasing number of minority problems. Governments using international terrorism (i.e.: Iran, Libya) Wide range of compact, sophisticated weapons available to terrorists ? even small organizations become capable to cause considerable damage Less dangerous to be a terrorist (i.e.: abolition of death penalty) Developments in Mass Media ? greater pressure on Gov. to ?give in? to terrorist demands. Rise of fundamentalist Islam (i.e.: suicide bombings) Ending of the period of decolonialisation ? remaining areas of dissatisfaction are urban. (major problem has become unfair distribution of wealth)

How successful is Terrorism? Little evidence that terrorism is successful. No purely terrorist group has brought about the changes it desired b/c: Ultimate objectives of most terrorist groups unrealistic (i.e.: Red Brigades in Italy wanted to destroy existing society) Have few members. Few had support of the working class they claimed to represent. Only have upper hand if Gov. is limited in its means to employ against them. May be self-destructive: i.e.: 1970s in Argentina, left-wing terrorism led to a right-wing military coup. Terrorism can only succeed where the terrorist have widespread support (i.e.: PLO) Can Terrorism be eradicated? Cannot totally be destroyed but can be rendered ineffective. Bear in mind that: If there are genuine grievances then it is impossible. Governments that are ?soft? encourage further attacks. Isolated terrorist attacks are the most difficult to prevent.

## About the Author

Revision notes by Fredy

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