

TWO

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THE POLITICAL  
AND MILITARY  
CONDUCT  
OF THE WAR



## I. THE POLITICAL ASPECT

### 7. *Direct Action on the Populations of Cities*

Internal warfare within a population, particularly in cities, generally involves an extensive *police operation*. There is also an intensive *propaganda effort*, destined primarily to make the steps that are taken understood. A broad *social program* follows, the objective of which is to give the people the material and moral assistance necessary to permit them to resume their normal activities quickly after operations are over.

We have seen how action against the population is conducted by the enemy, and we stressed the primary role of terrorism supported by a warfare organization.

Any actions taken in cities against enemy organizations will be essentially broad *police operations* and will be performed by the regular police forces if these are adequate and capable. If not, the army may take over the task.

The mission of the police operation is not merely to seek a few individuals who have carried out terrorist attacks, but to eliminate from the midst of the population the entire enemy organization that has infiltrated it and is manipulating it at will.

Simultaneously, units of the army will spread their activity throughout the entire city, throwing over it an immense net to overlay the police forces already in place. The police organization will not be disturbed, but will continue to

operate within its normal framework while cooperating completely with the army.

Without fear of reaction from the enemy, the army will operate in light detachments. A highly mobile reserve element, the size of a company, will usually allow the handling of any unforeseen eventuality in even a large city.

The police forces can take advantage of the army's presence and the protection and assistance that it will afford to undertake without delay (as described in the preceding chapter) the organization and control of the population, the creation of a broadly based intelligence service, and the establishment of an intelligence-action service—all of which ought to start functioning as quickly as possible.

In this way, we can oppose the enemy with our own organization. If we are serious, it will quickly be in place. Working openly in a systematic way and with great resources, the forces of order will often be able to outrun the enemy, who, obliged to operate in secret, has only limited resources at his disposal.

Then, in collaboration with the police services, we obtain as much information as possible on the organization to be destroyed and then reconstruct, if possible, its organizational chart. Since it is adapted to each city according to the city's importance and the local situation, the organization will rarely be very different in its general structure from that of Algiers in 1956–57, described at the beginning of this study.

The forces of order must simultaneously initiate normal police operations, which from the outset will run into serious difficulties. We know that if the enemy opens hostilities it is because certain preliminary conditions have been met: Principally, he is capable of exercising a strong hold over the populace his attacks have terrorized.

The people know certain key persons in the enemy or-

ganization—fund collectors, activists, and terrorists of the armed groups who live in permanent contact with the population. But they will not denounce them unless they can do so in safety. Therefore, assuring this safety is one of the first aims of the inhabitants' organization and the intelligence service. We cannot wait, however, until an intelligence network has been set up before obtaining from the population the information we need. Operations must begin as soon as the army has taken up its position.

The inhabitants are first mustered entirely, by city district. They are quickly interrogated, individually and in secret, in a series of previously arranged small rooms. Any noncommissioned officer of the unit can ask them simple questions, the most frequent of which will be, "Who in your district collects the organization's funds?"

As time goes on, we increase the number of interrogation teams. Certain inhabitants, assured that their identities will not be disclosed, will readily give the information requested. After verifying this data, we proceed to the arrest of the individuals who have been singled out. In this manner, we can capture the first-echelon elements of the enemy organization.

Except for rare cases of emergency, the arrests should take place at night, facilitated by a curfew. The forces of order can easily watch all the streets of a city with a minimum of troops. Anyone found away from his home at night is suspect, and will be arrested and interrogated. Numerous small patrols will move about rapidly and securely apprehend most of the individuals sought in their homes. These are interrogated on the spot by specialized teams. They must give quickly the names and addresses of their superiors, so that the latter may be arrested before the lifting of the curfew. During the day, they would surely be forewarned and would place themselves beyond our reach.

A series of night raids will cause important elements of the enemy organization to fall into our hands and will disrupt it.

There are other effective intelligence and control procedures. When we arrest important leaders, we carefully disguise them and line up before them all persons picked up in the course of police raids. The leaders will be able to point out members of their organization they recognize, whom we can arrest on the spot. At other times, we may place the leaders in concealed "observation posts," set up at heavily trafficked points in a city, from which they will indicate (by radio or other means) recognized individuals to surveillance teams who will quickly apprehend them.

One of our most effective methods is the census card (already described) issued to each individual. Of course, the important members of the enemy organization always have one or more pseudonyms, but certain inhabitants have met them at one time or other, although they may not know their name, function, or place of residence. However, they can readily recognize them from the photographs on the copies of the census card retained by the authorities. At one time, we can obtain not only their exact address, but also the names of those who are responsible for their movements (chiefs of house-groups and chiefs of sub-districts).

But the conduct of a police operation in the middle of a city raises numerous difficulties. We should note the main ones so that we may be able to overcome them.

1. *Modern warfare* is a new experience for the majority of our fellow citizens. Even among our friends, the systematic conduct of raids will run into opposition, resulting generally from a total lack of understanding of the enemy and his methods of warfare. This will often be very difficult to overcome.

For example, the fact that the enemy's warfare organization in a single city may consist of several thousand men

will come as a surprise even to the majority of high administrative functionaries, who thought sincerely that they were dealing with only a few isolated criminals.

One of the first problems encountered, that of lodging the individuals arrested, will generally not have been anticipated. Prisons, designed essentially to accommodate offenders against common law, will rapidly become inadequate and will not meet our needs. We will be compelled to intern the prisoners under improvised, often deplorable conditions, which will lead to justifiable criticism our adversaries will exploit. From the beginning of hostilities, prison camps should be set up according to the conditions laid down by the Geneva Convention. They should be sufficiently large to take care of all prisoners until the end of the war.

2. By every means—and this is a quite legitimate tactic—our opponents will seek to slow down and, if possible, put an end to our operations. The fact that a state of war will generally not have been declared will be, as we have already indicated, one of their most effective means of achieving this. In particular, they will attempt to have arrested terrorists treated as ordinary criminals and to have members of their organization considered as minor peacetime offenders.

On this subject, the files of the Algiers terrorist organization divulged some particularly interesting documents.

“We are no longer protected by legality,” wrote the chief of the Algiers F.L.N. in 1957, when the army had taken over the functions of the police. “We ask all our friends to do the impossible to have legality re-established; otherwise we are lost.”

Actually, the peacetime laws gave our enemies maximum opportunities for evading pursuit; it was vital to them that legality be strictly applied. The appeal was not launched in vain. Shortly thereafter, a violent press cam-

paign was unleashed, both in France and abroad, demanding that peacetime laws be strictly adhered to in the course of police operations.

3. Warfare operations, especially those of a police nature in a large city, take place in the very midst of the populace, almost in public, whereas formerly they occurred on a battlefield, to which only armed forces had access.

Certain harsh actions can easily pass for brutalities in the eyes of a sensitive public. And it is a fact also that, in the process of extirpating the terrorist organization from their midst, the people will be manhandled, lined up, interrogated, searched. Day and night, armed soldiers will make unexpected intrusions into the homes of peaceful citizens to carry out necessary arrests. Fighting may occur in which the inhabitants will suffer.

People who know our adversaries will not protest in submitting to inconveniences they know to be necessary for the recovery of their liberty. But our enemies will not fail to exploit the situation for their propaganda needs.

Nevertheless, even if some brutality is inevitable, rigorous discipline must always be enforced to prevent wanton acts. The army has the means of demanding and maintaining firm discipline. It has at its disposal its own system of justice, precisely created to check quickly misdeeds or crimes committed by military personnel in the exercise of their duties. The army must apply the law without hesitation.

Under no pretext, however, can a government permit itself to become engaged in a polemic against the forces of order in this respect, a situation that can benefit only our adversaries.

Police action will therefore be actual operational warfare. It will be methodically pursued until the enemy organization has been entirely annihilated. It will not end



until we have organized the population and created an efficient intelligence service to enable it to defend itself. This organization will have to be maintained until the end of hostilities to prevent any return by the enemy to the offensive. After the battle of Algiers in 1957, the French Government, under pressure from our adversaries, permitted the dismantling of everything the army had built up. Three years later, the enemy was able to re-establish his organization and once again to take control of the population (December, 1960). The victory of Algiers in 1957 had gone for naught.

Our war aims must be clearly known to the people. They will have to be convinced that if we call upon them to fight at our sides it can only be in defense of a just cause. And we should not deceive them. The surest means of gaining their confidence will be to crush those who want to oppress them. When we have placed the terrorists out of harm's way, the problem of pacification will be quickly resolved.

As long as we have not arrived at such a point, any *propaganda*, any solution, however skillful, will be ineffective on a populace infected by clandestine organisms that penetrate like a cancer into its midst and terrorize it. It is only when we have delivered it from this evil that it will freely listen, think, and express itself. A just peace will then be quite possible.

During the period of active operations, the role of propaganda action of the masses will have little effect. It will usually be limited to making the people understand that the frequently severe measures taken have no purpose other than to cause the rapid destruction of the enemy.

With the gradual return to peace, however, propaganda will play an important role in causing the sometimes impatient masses to understand the variety of problems that

must be resolved before a return to normal existence is possible. The inhabitants' organization will be the most effective instrument of propaganda contact and dissemination.

The people know instinctively what is correct. It is only by substantive measures that we will lead them to judge the validity of our action.

War has always been a calamity for the people. Formerly, only those inhabitants who found themselves in the paths of the armies had to suffer the calamity. Today, *modern warfare* strikes the entire population of a country, the inhabitants of the large cities as well as those of the most remote rural districts.

The enemy, infiltrated among the people, will always try to deprive the inhabitants of their means of subsistence. It is among the people that combat operations will take place, and their activities will be limited in many ways. They will have to suffer the exacting demands the enemy invokes to compel obedience, as well as the frequently severe measures the forces of order are led to take.

It will be the role of the *social services* to lessen the miseries war engenders.

But we must not lose sight of the fact that any material aid we give will only profit the enemy if the organization that permits his control and manipulation of the people has not first been destroyed. Aid must be prudently administered until the police operation has been completed; premature, uncontrolled assistance would be of no use to the inhabitants.

Once peace has been established, even in a small part of the territory, extensive and generous social assistance will be of prime importance in bringing to our cause many people who are unhappy and often disoriented by

the military operations and who will not have always understood the underlying reasons for them.

The conduct of military operations in a large city, in the midst of the populace, without the benefit of the powerful weapons it possesses, is certainly one of the most delicate and complex problems ever to face an army.

To carry out effective police work, conduct operations among the citizenry, and cause the inhabitants to participate actively on its side, are obviously tasks for which the military generally has not been prepared. Some feel that these operations should be entirely carried out by the police, and that the army should keep to the nobler task, better adapted to its specialty, of reducing armed bands in the field.

This is a grave error into which our adversaries would certainly like to lead us. The job of the police is only to ensure the protection of the people in time of peace against ordinary offenders or criminals. But the police do not have the means of conducting combat operations against a powerful enemy organization whose aim is not to attack individuals protected by the police, but rather to conquer the nation and to overthrow its regime.

The protection of the national territory and regime is quite clearly the essential role of the army. By and large it has the means necessary for victory; there is only the question of will and method.

## II. THE MILITARY ASPECT

### 8. *Errors in Fighting the Guerrilla*

The basic weapon of *modern warfare*, particularly in the cities, is terrorism, supported by a special organization. In the countryside, there is an old method of combat that has proved itself in the past and has been taken over and adapted to conditions of *modern warfare*: It is guerrilla warfare, which is rooted in terrorism.

The guerrilla and terrorism are only one stage of *modern warfare*, designed to create a situation favorable to the build-up of a regular army for the purpose of eventually confronting an enemy army on the battlefield and defeating him.

The goal of the guerrilla, during what can be a long period of time, is not so much to obtain local successes as it is to create a climate of insecurity, to compel the forces of order to retire into their most easily defensible areas. This results in the abandonment of certain portions of territory that the guerrillas are then able to control. At the beginning of hostilities, the guerrillas show themselves only in minor but violent actions, which they carry out by surprise but with care to avoid losses.

Dispersion is a necessary part of their defense. Their subsequent regrouping and transformation into large, regularly organized units is not possible until they have acquired absolute control of a vast area in which they are able to secure the substantial material aid necessary for

the establishment, training, and enlistment of a regular army.

The appearance of regular units in certain regions does not mean the end of the guerrilla. He will continue actively wherever the establishment of regular units has not been carried out. Regular units and guerrilla bands will cooperate closely to try to bring about a situation favorable to the engagement of the enemy army in a decisive fight to annihilate it.

*Modern warfare*, like classical wars of the past, will definitely end only with the crushing of one of the two armies on the battlefield, or by capitulation of one side to the war aims of the opponent.

The origin, evolution, and efficacy of the guerrilla are well known. Many authors have studied him, particularly in the various theaters of operation of World War II. He was unquestionably a success in Russia, France, and Yugoslavia. In China and Indochina, it was possible to lead him to a final victory over well-equipped regular modern armies. In Algeria, despite his meager resources of personnel and materiel, he has for years fought a French army that has not succeeded in eliminating him.

There are those who think that, to defeat the guerrilla, it is sufficient to fight him with his own weapons; that is, to oppose the guerrilla with the counterguerrilla. In a way, this is what we tried to do in Indochina and then in Algeria. But the guerrilla's weapons and those of a regular army are quite different, even opposed, in a number of respects.

To attempt to employ guerrilla tactics that we ourselves do not have or cannot put to use is to condemn ourselves to neglect those that we do possess and that can have a definite, useful application.

I believe that the errors committed and the failures sus-

tained flow in large part from confusion between the guerrilla's potential and that of a regular army. For brief intervals in Indochina, we were able to play the part of the counter guerrilla against the Vietminh, and even that of the guerrilla. This experience illustrated the difference between the potential of the guerrilla and of the regular army soldier.

At the time that the French Army occupied Than-Uyen on the right bank of the Red River, to the north of Nghia-Lo in Thai country, the town and its airfield were defended by a fortified post atop a rocky peak, held by one regular company reinforced by some partisans. But its security was rather chancy, even around the immediate approaches of the town, and on numerous occasions the Vietminh were able to open fire on the planes parked on the airfield.

After the fall of Nghia-Lo, the town of Than-Uyen, which had been evacuated by air-lift, was occupied by the Vietminh.

Then, in October, 1953, native maquisards from the right bank of the Red River, recruited from among people who had remained loyal to us, were able with their own resources to reoccupy the Phong-Tho region and its airfield, to launch a successful raid on Lao-Kay, and, finally, to seize Than-Uyen and hold it for seven months, deep behind enemy lines. When observers came back to the town, they were struck by the fact that the fortified post had not been reoccupied and the airfield was never guarded. Nonetheless, security was tighter than the previous year when French troops held the position.

The regular troops had observed the airfield and its immediate approaches from the fortified post. Outside of a quite limited circle of vision, they were blind, particularly at night when they missed everything. The Vietminh,

who knew the limits of this circle, were able to harass us easily.

Our maquisards, recruited from among and living in the midst of the local population, watched not the airfield, but rather the Vietminh themselves. They placed their agents everywhere—in units of the Vietminh, in every village, in every house, and on all the trails of the area. The entire population was responsible for watching the enemy, and nothing could escape its observation. When the maquisards signaled us that the area was free, our planes were able to land without risk on the airfield, to which it was unnecessary to give close protection.

The support of the population is essential to the guerrilla. In particular, it prevents him from being taken by surprise, a vital factor for success in combat. As long as this support is not withdrawn from him, we cannot surprise him, unless he commits some blunder, which is unlikely if he is well trained and battle-hardened.

This is the reason why methods currently employed against guerrillas—such as military outposts, autonomous commando groups or patrols detached from such posts, isolated ambushes, and wide-ranging sweeps—only rarely achieve the hoped-for results, and then usually by accident.

*Military outposts*, installed at great expense in areas to be pacified, are in general not successful. Often the villages they surround are as well controlled by our enemies as villages quite distant.

Outposts are usually placed at communications junctions that must be held to secure heavy equipment. They cause the guerrillas no trouble because there is no need to take them. Armed bands can freely circulate in the large areas between the outposts, and can organize and control the population without interference. A few cleverly

planned terrorist attacks can suffice to subject the inhabitants to their will.

In addition, the disposition of the outposts is an open book to our enemies, who observe them at their leisure. They miss nothing.

The only usefulness of the outposts is the obligation they create for us. To maintain them forces us to open and keep up roads, to protect supply convoys during the course of long hauls, and in general to carry on military activity in which we would not indulge if it were not for the outposts.

To break the feeling of isolation, which is not long in coming, the more active or experienced outposts send out patrols rarely exceeding about sixty men (two platoons) in strength. Certain sectors even make use of specially trained commandos of company strength. Their mission is to patrol day and night a predetermined sector by a variety of routes, with the objective of creating a sense of insecurity in the guerrillas surrounding the post and of reassuring the people by their presence.

The populace sees the commandos or patrols passing through, and often views them sympathetically. But the patrols always pass too quickly to destroy the organization the rebels have set up in each village to terrorize the inhabitants and to bend them to their will—the fund collectors, organization leaders, lookouts, etc. As long as this structure is not demolished, the population's fear will remain the same and the task of pacification can make no headway.

Away from their outposts or bases, the commandos or patrols are unable to subsist for long—a few days at best, just time enough to use up the rations they can carry. They cannot live off the land, because they do not have at their disposal the resources the guerrillas use. The guerrilla bands have inhabitants to guide them, an organization



that prepares their bivouac each day, sees to their provisioning, and assures their security.

The commandos move about blindly, guided only by the reconnaissance elements they send ahead. At night, even with sentinels nearby, their security is precarious at best. Physical and mental wear and tear come rapidly.

In addition, they are unable to vary their itinerary as much as they would like, particularly on the trip back and if the terrain is difficult. They cannot escape the observation of the inhabitants and the lookouts, who are able to analyze their habits quickly. They will shortly realize that a patrol on a certain path will not leave it—sometimes by force of habit, often because it has no way of getting out. Nothing will happen as long as our enemies are unable to bring together sufficient forces for an attack. But when this time comes, they will make the best of it.

Patrol action, unwearingly attempted by military men who still believe it possible to beat the enemy on his own ground, is often rewarded by serious failures; at best, it never produces convincing results.

That is why outposts, when first established, attempt to carry out some external activity, but then pull in their horns and never try again.

For the same reasons, *isolated ambushes* do not accomplish anything. Usually they are betrayed before they take place and come to nothing; at other times, they actually do us harm.

Pursuit commandos or isolated ambushes are combat operations the guerrilla can employ with the backing of the population and when he has a support organization on the spot. As long as we are unable to resort to the same methods, we will achieve only mediocre results, which are disproportionate to the risks run and the efforts demanded from the soldiers.

*Large-unit sweeps*, conducted with conventional resources within a framework similar to that of conventional warfare, and invariably limited in time,\* temporarily disperse guerrilla bands rather than destroy them.

A normal operation of this type usually consists in the attempted surprise encirclement of a well-defined zone in which guerrillas are thought to be located, while mobile elements conduct a mopping-up operation. Despite the ingenuity, even mastery, which some commanders have demonstrated in moving their units about, these operations are always the same.

Surprise, that essential factor of success, is practically never realized. As we have seen, the people among whom our troops live and move have as their mission the informing of the guerrillas, and no movement of troops can escape them. The noose is never completely tightened. The troops charged with the mop-up operations are always too few in number to search a vast and difficult terrain in which the dispersed bands are able to disappear during the brief operation.

Traditionally attracted by the purely military aspect of warfare—that is, by the pursuit and destruction in combat of guerrilla bands on the ground—operational commanders invariably hope to succeed in maneuvering them like regular units and to gain a rapid and spectacular success. They have little interest in the less noble task, however essential, of subtle work with the population and the destruction of the clandestine organization that enables guerrilla bands to survive despite local defeats the forces of order periodically inflict.

Only a long occupation of the countryside, which will permit police operations among the people analogous to those carried out in the cities, can succeed.

\* Frequently, in fact, it is decided a priori that a given operation not last more than a short, predetermined time—several days, for example.

The certainty of never running the risk of a clear defeat, such as an equally armed opponent could inflict upon us, enables any military commander to conduct some sort of operation. Even if guerrilla bands are not destroyed, at least geographical objectives are secured within the prescribed time, and a few dead rebels will always balance the account. If, moreover, a few arms are recovered, the operation, which has been carried out like a normal peacetime maneuver, then assumes an air of battle and victory sufficient to satisfy a commander who is not too exacting.

But that which is essential—*the destruction of the enemy's potential for warfare*—is never accomplished, principally because it is never seriously contemplated.

If it is still necessary to remove any illusion regarding the possibility of conducting a surprise envelopment against guerrillas, under conditions where the population has not yet been brought under control by the forces of order, an account by a former officer in Indochina follows:

In 1948, in a certain sector, I was able to establish relations with a Vietminh captain in charge of a command (a *Bo Doi*) that was independent of the enemy regiment stationed in the region. He himself was not a Communist, although the entire cadre of the regiment was. Still, he was unwilling to rally to the French cause, and he explained his reasons as follows: "Some day, sooner or later, we shall have peace with France. My personal situation at that time will be what I have made it. If I should go over to your side today, you would always consider me a turncoat, and you would give me at best rather menial employment. I have chosen the Vietminh because it is here that I have the best chances for advancement. If the regiment on my flank, therefore, should suffer a serious defeat, my own sector will increase in importance, and my future will be enhanced. I am in a position to give you information that will be useful to you in this respect."

As a matter of fact, he provided me with a precisely detailed plan of the regimental command post and its camouflaged forest installations, which had previously evaded our observation. In exchange, I generously promised to warn him in advance of the projected operation. "That's quite unnecessary," he said ironically. "I'm always aware of your operations at least twenty-four hours in advance. There will be plenty of time for me to withdraw to another sector."

I had always been convinced that I was preparing my operations in the utmost secrecy, but nothing could escape the numerous agents among the population surrounding us, who spied upon us unceasingly.

## *9. The Problem of Resources*

The traditional army, having at its disposal large numbers of trained troops and an abundance of modern materiel, in the final analysis is completely incapable of overcoming a practically destitute enemy whose leaders and men have received only rudimentary military training. Incredible as this seems, it is nonetheless a bitter reality.

A slave to its training and traditions, our army has not succeeded in adapting itself to a form of warfare the military schools do not yet teach. Its valiant efforts, sufferings, and sacrifices serve to obstruct the enemy, to slow down the execution of his plan, but they have been incapable of stopping the enemy from attaining his objective.

The army usually strikes into a vacuum, and fruitlessly expends considerable materiel. Nor would a significant increase in materiel bring a solution any closer. It is how we exploit our resources that we must completely revise.

If we want to meet the guerrilla successfully and to defeat him within a reasonable period of time, we must study his methods, study our own methods and their potential, and draw from this study some general principles that will permit us to detect the guerrilla's weak points and concentrate our main efforts on them.

The following table compares simply the guerrilla's basic resources with those of the traditional army:

*Traditional army*

1. Has large numbers of well-armed troops, ready supplies of food and ammunition.
2. Can move quickly over favorable terrain (aviation, motor vehicles, boats, etc.).
3. Has a well-organized communications network, which gives it great control advantages.

*BUT*

1. Experiences great difficulty in moving about guerrilla country; usually has imperfect knowledge of the terrain.
2. Has practically no support from the population, even if it is not hostile.
3. Has great difficulty in getting information on the movements and intentions of the guerrilla.

*Guerrilla band*

1. Has small numbers of poorly armed troops (at least at the beginning of hostilities), difficulty in obtaining supplies of food and ammunition.
2. Can move only on foot.
3. Has little long-distance communications equipment (at least at the outset), which leads to difficulties in coordinating operations.

*BUT*

1. Chooses own terrain, is well adapted to it, can move quickly, and quite often disappears into it.
2. Has the support of the population (either spontaneous or through terror), to which it is closely tied.
3. Gets information on all our movements from the populace and sometimes (through agents infiltrated into our midst) on our intentions as well.

By studying this table, we can see that the guerrilla's greatest advantages are his perfect knowledge of an area (which he himself has chosen) and its potential, and the support given him by the inhabitants.

The advantages of the traditional army are imposing superiority in numbers and in materiel, practically unlimited

sources of supply, and the advantages of command and extended maneuver granted by modern methods of communication and transport.

What can the guerrilla do with the means he has at his disposal?

He chooses the terrain and imposes it upon us. It is usually inaccessible to heavy and quick-moving equipment, and thus deprives us of the benefit of our modern arms. We are forced to fight on foot, under conditions identical to those of the guerrilla.

On his terrain, which he knows perfectly, he is able to trap us easily in ambushes or, in case of danger, to disappear. On the other hand, if he is an incomparable fighter on his own grounds, or in an area to which he has adapted himself, *the guerrilla loses a great deal of his value in new or unknown terrain*. He also is inclined not to leave his area, but clings to it except in case of absolute necessity, because he knows that away from his own terrain and deprived of his means of support he is only a mediocre fighter.

We have already seen how indispensable the support of the population is to the guerrilla. It is possible for him to exist only where the people give him their unqualified support. He cannot live among a populace he has not previously organized and subjected to his will, because it is from it that he must draw his sustenance and protection.

It is the inhabitant who supplies the guerrilla with his food requirements on an almost daily basis, thereby enabling him to avoid setting up cumbersome supply points—so easily identifiable and difficult to re-establish. It is the inhabitant also who occasionally supplies him with ammunition. The inhabitant contributes to his protection by keeping him informed. Our rest and supply bases are located in the midst of a populace whose essential mission is to keep an eye on them. No troop movement can escape

the inhabitant. Any threat to the guerrilla is communicated to him in plenty of time, and the guerrilla can take cover or trap us in profitable ambushes. Sometimes the inhabitant's home is the guerrilla's refuge, where he can disappear in case of danger.

But this total dependence upon terrain and population is also the guerrilla's weak point. We should be able, with our more powerful potential, to make him submit or to destroy him by acting upon his terrain and upon his support—the population.

Knowing that the guerrilla sticks to the area of his choice, we ought resolutely to engage him there. Once we have occupied the terrain, we ought to have the will and the patience to track him down until we have annihilated him. This requires time, and our operations will be long.

We know also that he is less of a fighter away from home. We should therefore devote ourselves to making him forgo the benefit of his terrain by causing him to leave it. Whenever possible, we should interrupt his food supplies, much more important than his supplies of ammunition. Action of this kind often implies political or economic measures that do not always fall within the purview of military leaders, but they should be used whenever possible.

Above all, we must loose the guerrilla's hold on the population by systematically destroying his combat organization. Finally, we must permit the people to participate in their own defense and to protect themselves against any offensive return of the enemy, by having them enter into the structured organization we have already described. Such an organization must be established without delay in areas we control that could be the refuge of armed bands.

To recapitulate our rapid analysis, we have three simple principles to apply in fighting the guerrilla—to cut the



guerrilla off from the population that sustains him; to render guerrilla zones untenable; and to coordinate these actions over a wide area and for long enough, so that these steps will yield the desired results.

The fight against the guerrilla must be organized methodically and conducted with unremitting patience and resolution. Except for the rare exception, *it will never achieve spectacular results, so dear to laurel-seeking military leaders.* It is only by means of a sum total of perfectly coordinated, complex measures—which we are going to make an effort to study—that the struggle will, slowly but surely, push the guerrilla to the wall.

Before drawing some practical conclusions about the conduct of operations against the guerrilla, we should examine those the U.S. Army conducted with complete success in Korea. Thanks to a series of methodically conducted operations, the army was able, in a relatively short period of time, to eliminate completely the guerrillas who had installed themselves behind the American lines in 1950.

In an article entitled "Beating the Guerrilla," (*Military Review*, December, 1955), Lieutenant Colonel John E. Beebe, of the faculty of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, draws profitable lessons from these operations.

Military operations alone he says, are not sufficient. Counter guerrilla operations have two objectives—the destruction of the guerrilla forces, and the eradication of their influence on the population.

The counter guerrilla plan to prevent the formation of guerrilla units or to destroy them if they have been formed, since it will comprise measures that are political, economic, psychological, administrative, and military, must be prepared at a very high command echelon.

For the conduct of operations against the guerrilla, he

recommends that the command post of the counterguerrilla forces be established near the guerrilla zone and that troops penetrate the zone of the guerrilla and install bases of operations there, taking the necessary security precautions. Then a plan of combat and ambush against the guerrillas can be prepared, with the idea in mind of constantly maintaining pressure to deprive them of any chance of resting or of reorganizing and preparing new operations.

*This operation will end only when there are no longer any guerrillas in the area.* Counterguerrilla operations involve large numbers of soldiers and last many months. In Korea, there were two examples.

Operation Ratkiller, in the mountainous region of southwest Korea, was conducted by three divisions—two Korean and one American—to which was added a police battalion. It lasted three and a half months, from December 1, 1951, until March 16, 1952, during the course of which 11,000 guerrillas were killed and 10,000 taken prisoner.

Operation Trample, against guerrilla elements still remaining in the south of Korea, was conducted by two divisions from December, 1953, until June, 1954—just about six months. It was the last of the operations against the guerrilla, and the first during the course of which the population gave its total support to the troops responsible for the maintenance of order.

These lessons do not differ from those that may be drawn from several successful counterguerrilla operations in South Vietnam, at the beginning of the Indochina campaign, and even in Algeria.

## 10. Conducting Counter guerrilla Operations

### THE ENEMY ORGANIZATION

In any military operation, we must first locate the enemy before we can concentrate our blows against him.

We know that in *modern warfare* we are not clashing with just a few armed bands, but rather with an organization installed within the population—an organization that constitutes the combat machine of the enemy, of which the bands are but one element.

To win, we have to destroy this entire organization.

We have seen the importance the *organization* can assume in a single city like Algiers. And because of our experience in Algeria, we know what a war organization covering a whole country is like.

Algeria is divided into 6 *wilayas* (major military districts); each *wilaya* is divided into 4 or 5 zones; each zone into 4 or 5 regions; each region into 4 or 5 sectors; and, finally, each sector is divided into a certain number of communes.

Just as in the cities, at each geographical level fulfilling the same functions we find the same leaders—a politico-military leader, a political assistant, a military assistant, and an assistant responsible for liaison and intelligence.

There are also departments, unnecessary in the cities, that have been created for the broader organization—a director responsible for logistical problems, especially for

food supplies; and a person responsible for the health service, for organizing hospitals when possible, and for looking after the populace in this respect.

The councils at all levels make their decisions in common, but the politico-military leader has the deciding voice.

(The geographic breakdown, made solely with the conduct of the war in mind, is never patterned on the lines of peacetime administration. Nevertheless, the approximate equivalents are as follows: A *wilaya* comprises the same area as an *igamie*,\* a zone that of a French department, and a region that of an *arrondissement*.)

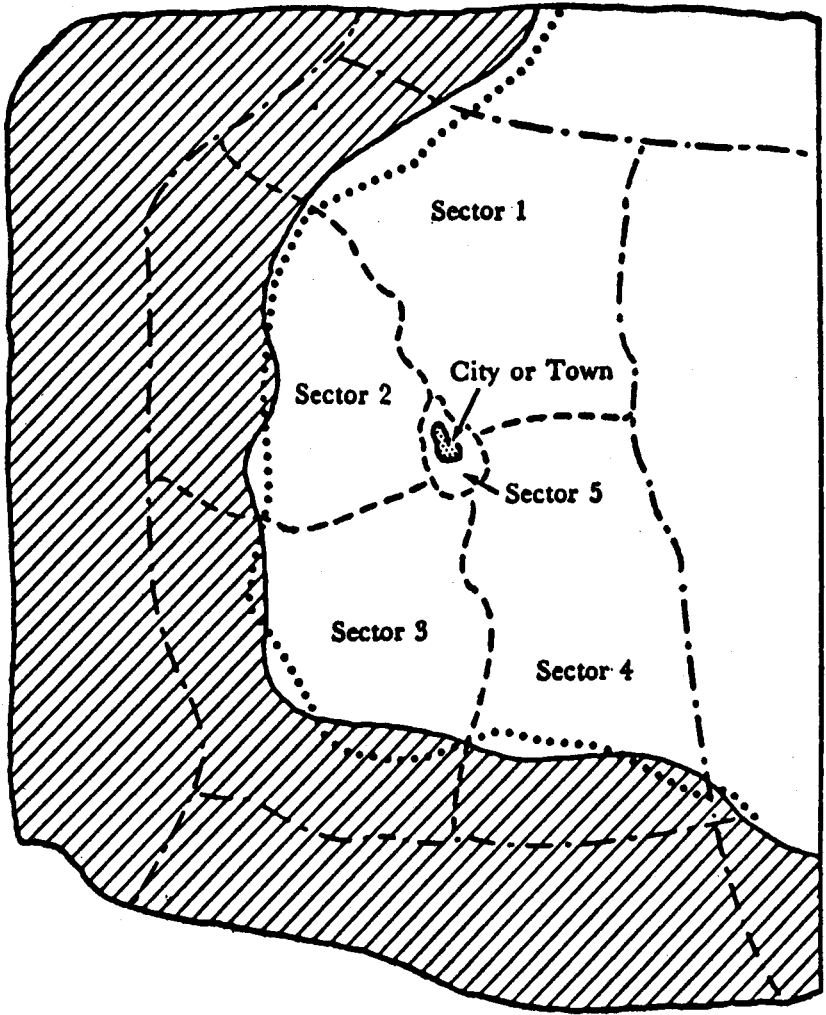
The *basic* unit of organization is the region. It is the lowest echelon at which a complete staff, such as we have just described, is found. At lower levels—the sector and the commune—the staff is merely embryonic. In the communes in particular, it is reduced to the “committee of five,” the most important of whom is the man charged with problems of supply.

A region is divided into a certain number of sectors, four or five depending upon the extent of the area and the characteristics of the terrain. (See the adjoining sketch.)

The urban sector is small in area but encompasses the largest population concentration of the region, quite often the chief town of the *arrondissement*. Here there is located a military unit the size of a platoon, well trained and well armed, especially entrusted with the task of carrying out assassinations and of continually presenting a threat to the inhabitants of the town. Then there are three or four sectors of similar characteristics. In the urban sector, the enemy permanently assigns some of his own people to serve

\* Translator's note: In French administrative parlance an *igame* is an *inspecteur général d'administration en mission extraordinaire*, e.g., an official outranking several departmental prefects and supervising them. The territory under his control is then known as an *igamie*.

SKETCH OF A THEORETICAL REGION



- Boundaries between sectors
- .-.-.- Boundaries between regions
- ..... Boundary between mountainous and inhabited areas

in the town's political administration. Each is in charge of an area of the inhabited flat land that extends from the town to the hilly country. It is here that the "base" of the

armed band is located, usually a company per sector. The *refuge area* is in the roughest part of the adjoining mountains, to which the band may withdraw in case of danger.

Except for operational missions ordered by the region, or in case of grave danger, the band does not leave its sector, where it has its roots and the elements that help it to subsist. Away from its sector, it would enjoy no support and would usually move about in unknown terrain. In such cases, it would be quite vulnerable.

Within a given sector, the various elements of the enemy organization are divided geographically into three groups:

*The towns or population centers* each under the command of a politico-administrative leader responsible for organizing urban terrorism, collection of funds, propaganda, and an intelligence service, whose main task is to report on the movements of army troops stationed in the town.

*The inhabited rural area*, under the command of a politico-military leader responsible for maintaining a firm hold on the population; distributing or arranging delivery of supplies coming from the towns, sheltering and feeding the band normally stationed there or those passing through; and providing the bands with information and, thanks to its armed partisans, close protection. In such an area, which is under some sort of control by the forces of order at least sporadically, the politico-military organization plays a very important role.

*The refuge area*, under the command of a politico-military leader, responsible for seeing to the guerrillas' security and supply, and assuring that the depots and bivouac areas are guarded when the bands are moving about. The refuge area is situated in terrain to which access is difficult, isolated by the cutting of roads, sabotage of bridges, etc.; and so organized to permit the bands to be stationed there.

The armed guerrilla band, because of the permanent threat it poses to the population and the fear it inspires

among units of the forces of order, is the guarantee of the entire organization. It normally inhabits the refuge area, but makes frequent visits to the intermediate area between the refuge area and the town, especially in winter when it lives there practically all the time.

The members of the sector organization thus live under one of two different kinds of situation—either in the town and the intermediate area; or in the intermediate or refuge area. But there is no direct connection between the towns and the refuge area.

When such an organization has been able to establish itself in a country, military operations directed against the armed bands never quite reach them. Even if they did reach them, the essential part of the organization would remain in place and, even without the bands, would stay sufficiently powerful to retain its hold over the population.

Victory therefore can be attained only through the complete destruction of the entire organization.

### COUNTERGUERRILLA STRATEGY

The most vulnerable part of the enemy organization is in the towns. It is always within the control of the army troops that occupy it, and a police operation conducted along the lines already described can destroy it.

But *the most desirable objective is the destruction of the politico-military organization in the intermediate area.* This we should undertake as soon as we have the necessary means at our disposal. Such an operation will lead us back to the town organization and also provide us with the channel essential to reaching the bands in the refuge areas. We can thus destroy the entire organization supporting the bands. Cut off from their sources of supply and information, they will be more vulnerable.

A broad envelopment, therefore, ought logically to begin with a police operation in the intermediate area. The

occupation of the intermediate area and the destruction of the organization supporting the bands is our first objective. In this way we can, in an initial phase, compel the bands to withdraw into the refuge area. Deprived of supplies and information, they will no longer be able to leave without risk and will find it difficult to defend themselves when we finally decide to attack them.

### COUNTERGUERRILLA TACTICS

#### *The Organization of Defense: "Gridding"*

The enemy's first acts of war—terrorist attacks, localized guerrilla action—generally take the peacetime forces of order—police, gendarmerie, army—by surprise. Too widely dispersed and too vulnerable, these forces quickly fall back upon the built-up areas, which offer them the best chance of resisting the aggressor.

Some elements are pushed back to positions that must be held. Traffic between these held positions is maintained or re-established by means of armed convoys, but the majority of secondary roads are abandoned.

The aggressor also obliges us to take up an area defense to protect vital positions and to prevent complete strangulation of the territory. This defense, more or less in depth, is established after taking into consideration immediate needs and available resources—vulnerable points, population density, attitude of the inhabitants, the necessity of keeping open roads and ways essential to the life of the country.

Eventually there is established a so-called defensive grid system, in which the military organization follows the lines of the civil administration to make maximum use of all command possibilities and to permit normal administration to function insofar as possible—the department becomes a zone, the arrondissement becomes a sector, the canton becomes a *quartier*.



The retreat of the forces of order rapidly delivers a large part of the territory to the enemy. Surprise has been to his advantage. From this point on he will attempt to consolidate and complete his combat organization, to defend the territory he has conquered against the forces of order, to crush one by one the largest number possible of the squares of the grid in order to increase the area under his control.

### *Offense—Sector Level*

How can we, with the forces at our immediate disposal, plus the reinforcements we shall receive, set about the destruction of the enemy's combat organization and the liberation of the occupied territory?

First of all, we have the troops that make up the initial grid, called sector troops. If the region is the basis of the enemy's organization, the sector (*arrondissement*) is the basis of our system.

The withdrawal of our elements has led to the creation of military posts in the most important villages and in the towns, particularly in the principal town of the sector.

We have observed how ineffective outposts are. Since the control of the population is the aim of *modern warfare*, any element not in direct and permanent contact with the population is useless. Furthermore, if we try to make strongholds of outposts, we would be surrounding them with walls built to support a siege the enemy has neither the intention nor the possibility of undertaking.

In the villages, however, we often find one or two empty houses, where the bands usually stay while in transit, which we can occupy. Other houses for the lodging of the men can be rented from the inhabitants or constructed if necessary.

We then organize not just the defense of a sole military post, but that of the entire village and its inhabitants, making it a strategic hamlet. A tight, impassable perimeter is

created (of barbed-wire, underbrush, various other materials), protected by a few armed blockhouses, manned with automatic weapons and capable of covering the whole perimeter.

A police operation is undertaken immediately within the village thus protected. Simultaneously, we organize the population according to the principles we studied previously.

Inhabitants of the nearest villages or isolated individuals are progressively brought within the security perimeter. Most of the others will come there themselves. The inhabitants are allowed to leave the village only by the gates, and all exits will be controlled. They are permitted to take neither money nor supplies with them. No one will be able to leave or enter the village by night.

In effect, we are re-establishing the old system of medieval fortified villages, designed to protect the inhabitants against marauding bands.

The first police operation will be carried out in the principal town of the sector (arrondissement). An office for the *control and organization of the inhabitants* is installed as soon as possible at the sector military staff. The town itself will be surrounded by a tight and protected perimeter, and all its entrances and exits will be controlled.

Inhabitants of the principal town and villages will, as we said earlier, receive a *census card*, a copy of which will be sent to the command post of the sector and district. Each card will bear a photograph of the individual, his house-group number (4), the letter of the sub-district (B), the number of the district (2), and the letter of the town or strategic hamlet (C).

The first part (C2) lets us know where he comes from; the second part (B4) tells us the leaders responsible for the individual—the house-group leader and the sub-district

leader. The census card will also enable us to control individual ration cards.

A census is also taken of all animals—draft animals (horses, donkeys, and mules) and bovines (calves, cows, and bulls) will be branded with the card number of their owner. We know how important supplies are to the guerrilla. Henceforth, no supplies are permitted to leave the towns or strategic hamlets. Even the animals will be strictly controlled. If we prohibit uncontrolled traffic of food on the main roads, we can cut off the enemy's main sources of supply in a very short time.

Thus, even with much reduced forces, we can again regain control of the major portion of the country's population—from 80 to 90 per cent, if one considers the total number of inhabitants of the large towns down to villages having gendarme units to control them. In this way, we have in our hands an important mass of people adequately protected and controlled, and able to be used to block the enemy offensive on all sides.

The intervals between the grid squares, however, still remain empty of troops; their defenseless inhabitants are at the mercy of enemy action. Broad-scale operations or commando raids may cause our opponents passing concern, but they are usually too brief and superficial to destroy their combat organization.

The organization and control of the inhabitants of the towns and strategic hamlets permit a majority of them to take part in their own defense. A certain number of troops can in this way be freed to reinforce the reserve element of the sector command. Being unengaged and mobile, they will form the sector's *interval troops* and act continuously between the outposts.

This force should be large enough to outclass an armed band whose size and quality will vary according to the

guerrilla's position and circumstances. But if we react quickly enough, before the situation can deteriorate, the enemy will not be able to create bands larger than approximately a company. This is the normal unit that will permit him to move about securely over long distances and to live off the country and the inhabitant, usually his sole sources of supply.

Therefore, a four-company battalion of infantry will be our standard interval unit. It must be essentially mobile, moving usually by foot, but also equipped with vehicles to move quickly over long distances. Its basic mission will be to destroy the politico-military organization in the intermediate area; to destroy the armed bands that attempt to oppose this action, to bring in people to the strategic hamlets and, if possible, to create new hamlets for regrouping and control of every inhabitant of the intermediate area.

If the sector's interval troops do not amount to at least a four-company battalion, they will certainly be unable to handle at one time the intermediate areas of an enemy region, which corresponds approximately to a French sector (arrondissement).

We know that, within the region, each enemy sector has an intermediate area of its own, where it puts up and supports an armed band.

At very least, we must attack the intermediate area of an enemy sector. Its boundaries are easily definable. Our police operations in the towns and strategic hamlets will have yielded sufficient information for us to establish them without difficulty. The interval troops cannot hope to surprise the enemy in this area by stealthy penetration, a desire we have seen is illusory, but they can surprise him by their methods.

Troops penetrate the intermediate area at the ready to avoid being surprised and to be in a position to maneuver in the event of a chance encounter with a band. If the

band succeeds in escaping or finds itself in its refuge area, the police operation commences immediately. The politico-military organization does not follow the band, as it would only be excess baggage. It stays in place or in the immediate vicinity. It is therefore always within range of the interval troop units, if there is sufficient time to look for it and destroy it.

Keeping one element in reserve, the troops spread over a large area in order to occupy, if possible, the entire intermediate area of the sector, especially the maximum number of villages and the most frequented paths.

Then, while part of the cadre sets out on an intensive search of the terrain, to locate any caches or deposits and to study a layout for the night's ambushes, the units' specialists undertake the police work.

The entire population of each village, men and women, is called together and prohibited from leaving for the duration of the operation. Every inhabitant is individually and privately interrogated, without any resort to violence. A few simple but precise questions will be asked of each. For the first interrogation, two in general will suffice—Which individuals collect funds in your village? Who are the young people who are armed and carry on the surveillance of the village?

If this first interrogation is well handled, several people will readily make the desired replies. Quite often, since guilty individuals hope to escape detection, the ones we seek will be among those assembled. We will therefore have no difficulty in arresting them. Those who have succeeded in leaving the village will not have gotten very far. Deprived of any contact with the population, they may very likely fall into our night ambushes when they attempt to find out what is going on or try to escape.

The first echelon of the enemy politico-military organization will also fall into our hands. More stringent in-

terrogation will enable us to discover quickly who all the members are—front leaders, members of committees of five, supply people, lookouts, etc.—as well as the location of food deposits and arms caches.

At least a week is needed for the specialized teams to destroy a village politico-military organization. This is likewise the minimum for a police operation in the inhabited rural area of an enemy sector.

Parallel to the work of destruction, we lay the foundation of our own system by selecting intelligence agents and organizing the populace.

To succeed, we must never lose sight of the fact that we will receive information only from people who can give us information without risk to themselves. We must assure our agents of this indispensable security.

We will choose them in the village itself. They will usually be people who proved best informed during the first interrogation. Having marked them, we contact them only in the course of the next police operation and under the same circumstances. They will then point out to us those men the enemy has installed to replace his disrupted organization. Later, when the situation has improved, we can find out who are capable of handling the secret communication of simple information.

We proceed immediately to the organization and control of the population of the intermediate area.

The first resort is the traditional division of the area into districts, sub-districts and house-groups—with the usual numbering. We conduct an exact census of all the inhabitants, their means of subsistence, and in particular their livestock. Then we enroll them in the structured organization of which we have already spoken.

In the beginning, we will not make many demands on the cadres we have chosen. But this initial activity will

greatly facilitate the control of the population in the course of subsequent police operations, which must be frequent if we want to prevent the destroyed organization from reconstituting itself. Individuals will be considered suspect who appear in the census but who cannot be found. Their leaders and their families will be held responsible for them. On the other hand, any individuals of whom no record has been made will be registered only after a very detailed interrogation.

Inhabitants from the rural areas who wish to join the strategic hamlets will be permitted to do so. With our assistance, they will carry with them all their means of subsistence. In this manner, we can continue to add to the number of persons controlled and protected. The difference in their manner of life, especially with respect to the degree of security accorded to the inhabitants in the protected perimeters, will constitute a powerful attraction throughout the intermediate area. Whenever and wherever we have enough troops and the necessary means, we must create new strategic hamlets.

Only if we approach the problem methodically can we continue to establish a strict control over all the population and its means of subsistence.

The supplying of the bands will become more and more difficult in the intermediate area as we proceed to drain off their means of support. If they can escape the frequent police operations of the interval troops, they will have to maintain themselves in their refuge area under difficult conditions. Armed with considerable information about the enemy (bivouacs, caches, depots, etc.), the sector commander will be able, with additional help on a temporary basis, to follow him into his refuge with good chances of destroying him.

Methodical and patient conduct of operations will, in

the easier sectors and those of medium difficulty, lead to the destruction of the enemy's combat apparatus and the restoration of peace within a reasonable length of time.

### *Offense—Zone Level*

If the action of the sector commanders is decisively carried out, the general commanding the zone (department) can move ahead with the essential role of achieving the methodic destruction of the enemy organization over a broader area.

For each sector, he will initially designate the points to be occupied in the execution of an over-all plan to avoid the strangulation of the department. He will especially determine the thoroughfares to be kept open to traffic.

Having dealt the adversary his initial setback, the commanding general takes the offensive. First he attacks the enemy organization in the important towns of the department, especially in the principal town, to put an end to the spectacular terrorist attacks which build the enemy's prestige.

He gives detailed orders for the conduct of police operations. He sees to it that the organization and control of the entire population is secured without delay. He assures that the methods and procedures used are the same throughout the area of the zone to maintain a uniformity of action. He will at all times have at his disposition a significant reserve element to bring pressure to bear on those points which, in their turn, appear most likely to hasten the execution of the pacification plan he has drawn up.

As we have seen, units of the enemy organization rarely coincide with the peacetime administrative boundaries our military organization must adopt.

The sector commanders ought not to stop any action at their own sector limits, but should rather follow up



methodically and relentlessly throughout the whole territory of the *enemy* organization attacked—sector or region. Hence, there is a necessity for coordinating operations at the zone level, and for strict planning of methods and procedures.

Refuge areas are usually in irregular terrain to which access is difficult, country often cut through with administrative boundaries. In such a case, the attack on the refuge areas will be launched by the general commanding the zone and at such time as the peripheral police operations of the sector commanders have been concluded.

While he leaves a broad area of initiative to his subordinates, the commanding general assures through frequent inspections that his orders are being strictly followed. He makes sure that his plan of pacification is followed in all areas, especially with respect to practical projects that call for considerable expenditures and in which no waste should occur. Such projects include construction of new roads, or the repair of those that have been sabotaged; construction of new strategic hamlets to receive people falling back from the danger areas; school construction, and economic development of the department to give displaced persons means of subsistence.

A well-conceived plan, executed with determination, courage, and foresight, will save from needless distress a population that will have had more than its share of suffering.

In areas of difficult access, where the guerrilla has been able to establish well-equipped bases for his bands and where he has numbers of seasoned fighters, the sector troops will generally not have sufficient resources to attack and destroy them. They will therefore have to appeal to the intervention troops.

The intervention troops of the zone will, in principle, consist of the zone commander's reserve elements, which

can be reinforced by levies on the general reserve of the theater commander if necessary. It is through the judicious use of intervention troops—injecting them at the desired moment at specific points—that the commanding general of the zone will be able to accelerate the process of pacification.

Their normal mission will be the destruction of the armed bands when the interval troops of the sectors have forced them to withdraw into the refuge area. An operation against the bands will not differ essentially from operations conducted by interval troops in the intermediate area. It will be their logical extension.

The number of troops to be employed will depend on the importance of the armed bands to be subdued and the extent of the refuge area. In general, two or three intervention regiments, working closely with interval units of the interested sectors, will suffice. They may be commanded by either the zone general or his deputy or, on occasion, by the sector commander most directly interested in the operation.

At an early stage, the target area is sealed off by interval troops of the sectors involved, who will establish themselves in the inhabited rural zones. If the police operation has been properly executed, contact between the guerrillas and the populace will have been broken; the inhabitants will already be regrouped and organized and an intelligence service created.

The troops responsible for the isolation of the refuge area will become thoroughly familiar with the terrain over which they repeatedly travel. This sealing-off, or encircling, will not be linear, but will extend over a deep and perfectly well-known zone in which any element of the band will be immediately detected and attacked.

After the net has been put in place, the zone intervention troops will invest—by helicopter, air-drop, or on

foot—the entire refuge area, simultaneously if possible. If a band is encountered, the troops must at all times be prepared to engage it, to maneuver, and to destroy it.

The commander of the operation divides the zone up among his units, which will in turn set up light bases maintained by a reserve element. During the course of the first day, the units will prudently and securely fan out as far from their base as they possibly can, to reconnoiter as many as possible of the paths and tracks where, at night-fall, ambushes will be set.

A reserve to be moved by helicopter is held in readiness for disposition by the zone commander, to permit him to exploit and pursue to a finish any engagement at any point in the operational area. Helicopters and light observation aircraft are precious instruments of reconnaissance and protection.

All inhabitants encountered are immediately assembled. The police operation, initiated without delay, will permit the completion of information on depots, bivouacs, caches, hospitals, etc.

The information obtained is exploited on the spot, but carefully and with sufficient troops to avoid surprise by an adversary who is well armed, hardened, and determined to defend himself.

Individuals recognized as part of the enemy organization are arrested and kept within the units for exploitation during the operation.

The population, usually not very numerous, is evacuated entirely to a regroupment center previously set up for this purpose.

From the very beginning, therefore, the bands will be cut off from any contact with the population, and thrown back solely on their own resources.

All troops engaged in the operation have their evening meal before the end of the hours of daylight. After night-

fall, no fires are lit. At appropriate points selected during the day, the ambushes go into effect. During the first days after the commencement of the operation, an ambush may take a platoon. But in the days that follow, taking advantage of the disarray of the adversary and our improved knowledge of the terrain, the number of ambush points will increase and the strength of each will diminish to where it does not exceed four or five men.

All paths, in particular those where it is impossible to establish ambushes, are booby-trapped in a simple manner—with grenades or plastic explosives—and retrieved in the morning by the same men who put them in place, to obviate blunders.

At night, the intervention troops and sector troops spread out a vast net; guerrillas who want to move about by night, leave the danger zone, or regroup, will run into it.

In general, it is recommended to fire without warning on any individual who wanders within close range of an ambush, say within ten yards. It is difficult to fire accurately at a greater distance at night, and guerrillas will never appear in front of an ambush in a compact group.

The net is kept in effect for two hours after daybreak, because quite often it is in the morning that guerrillas who want to escape will take their chances.

Around the area and in as great depth as possible, all outposts should keep on the alert, in a position to control all suspicious persons. Any individual not carrying his census card will be considered suspect and arrested.

Inside the zone during the day, patrols search the brush unceasingly and with minute care. They collect the dead for identification, the wounded for interrogation. Prisoners are subjected to quick interrogations and their statements checked on the spot.

This action will compel the guerrillas, cut off from the

population and with no knowledge of the situation, to leave their comfortable hiding places—where otherwise they might be discovered—to obtain water or food or to attempt to flee. Their wounded will become an impossible burden.

Appropriate psychological action, using loudspeakers or leaflets, will quite likely secure the surrender of weak individuals whom circumstances have placed beyond the reach and authority of their chiefs. Many of the guerrillas who have escaped the ambushes will give themselves up, demoralized. The entire operation must last as long as is necessary to destroy the guerrilla band completely.

Anything that would facilitate the existence of the guerrillas in any way, or which could conceivably be used by them—depots, shelters, caches, food, crops, houses, etc.—must be systematically destroyed or brought in. This will actually permit the methodical recovery of materiel and food, which can be distributed to the regrouped civilians. All inhabitants and livestock must be evacuated from the refuge area.

When they leave, the intervention troops must not only have completely destroyed the bands, but must leave behind them an area empty of all resources and absolutely uninhabitable.

The operation against the armed bands in a refuge area, supported by intervention troops, should spell the end of the battle against the guerrilla in a sector. To be successful, it must be prepared in the greatest detail at the echelon of the general commanding the zone. It should get under way when the operations of the interval troops in the sectors have created a favorable situation and the zone commander has assembled all the necessary men and materiel. Then, carefully prepared and energetically carried out, it cannot fail.

Once successful, the sector commander will be able to

regroup and control all of the inhabitants of his sector—the ultimate aim of *modern warfare* operations.

However, organization and control of the population, and supplementary controls over food, circulation of persons and goods, animals, etc., as well as a flawless intelligence service, must remain in force until peace has been restored to the entire national territory. Any lack of vigilance or premature dismantling of the control system will certainly permit the enemy to recoup lost ground and jeopardize the peace of the sector.

### *Offense—Theater Level*

The commander-in-chief of the entire theater of operations should maintain a considerable general reserve. This will permit him to strike at the precise time and place he judges opportune in the conduct of theater-level operations. By judicious employment of reserves, as we have seen, he will be able to accelerate and bring about the pacification of difficult areas.

For reasons of troop economy, certain areas may be abandoned or held by only very small forces. Here, the enemy will be able to organize and maintain significant forces. When the theater commander decides on their pacification, the normal resources of the sector and zone may be inadequate. Such operations will therefore fall to units of the general reserve.

At the beginning of any conflict, the enemy normally will not be able to launch hostilities simultaneously throughout the entire territory. He first sets himself up in areas favorable to guerrilla warfare and attempts to keep these under his control.

At this point, forceful action, quickly begun and vigorously carried out according to the principles discussed, ought to annihilate the guerrilla and prevent extension of the conflict. The success of such an operation is of the

utmost importance, because it can re-establish the peace in short order.

In any case, the operational area must be clearly defined and isolated. Initially, this is the role of the zones and sectors nearest the enemy. At the first aggressive acts, elements of the forces of order already in place—the army, gendarmerie, police, various peacetime intelligence services—attempt to determine as accurately as possible the limits of the area under the enemy's control.

After quickly establishing the limits of this area, the measures previously studied—control and organization of the populace, creation of an efficient intelligence service—can contain the enemy's sphere of action even further. The extent of this final restriction of enemy activity will delimit the area of attack.

The number of the troops (two to four divisions, if one accepts the Korean experience), the civilian and military means to be committed, the need for strict coordination of complex actions—all means that a theater-level operation ought not to be launched until detailed study permits the drawing up of a precise plan of action when the necessary men and equipment have been assembled. Insufficient means or carelessness of preparation and execution of operations will lead to certain failure; the area of the conflict would spread, and a long war could not be avoided.

The commander of the operation should be the commander of the general reserve units to be used. His will be the complete responsibility not merely to weaken the bands or disperse them, but rather to destroy the combat apparatus of the enemy and re-establish normal life within the affected area.

No time limit for the operation should be set ahead of time. It will end when the enemy's combat organization—guerrilla bands included—are completely destroyed (that is, when not one more guerrilla remains in the region),

and when a cohesive system capable of preventing any offensive return of the adversary has been established.

At the appropriate time, after the general reserves have been withdrawn, an assistant can be charged with assuring a rapid return to peacetime conditions in the liberated territory with whatever means are available and with the organization that has been created.

Although a theater-level operation differs in size from those previously considered, the principles to be applied are the same.

If the number of troops available can cover the whole target area, operations should begin simultaneously in both the intermediate and refuge areas. Valuable time may thus be saved. But we can only rarely bring together the troops necessary for an operation of such size.

Therefore, the operation usually begins in the intermediate area—which borders the refuge area—the importance of which we have already described, and with whose character we are familiar.

A vast police operation covering this whole area will enable us to destroy the important politico-military organism implanted there, and to complete if necessary the destruction of the politico-administrative organization of the towns.

At times we will run across guerrilla bands, which we will attempt to destroy, but above all we must put an end to their free passage and oblige them to withdraw and live in the refuge areas.

Parallel to the police operation, the now familiar organization is created to control food, animals, circulation of persons and consumer goods, etc. The inhabitants are regrouped in strategic hamlets, which will be equipped with the necessary means to ensure their control and protection. Villages, roads, and outposts are set up and a normal administration created.



The inhabited rural area will in this way become an immense worksite in which the populace, properly harnessed, can render precious and effective assistance.

It is only when the rural area operation has ended that theater-level operation against the refuge areas can be undertaken.

Our intelligence services, the civilian population, and prisoners, as well as the impression of strength emanating from a vast operation forcefully and methodically conducted, will have enabled us, before the launching of the operation, to be well-informed about the bands—their weapons, numbers, usual bivouac areas, shelters, caches, depots, normal routes of movement, means of subsistence, and sources of information.

We will not approach the refuge areas blindly, but will first have completely and precisely blueprinted our objectives.

Although it is on a much larger scale, the theater-level operation is carried out just like those against the refuge areas of the sector and the zone.

After first setting up a blockade, every modern method of transportation—helicopter, parachute, etc.—is employed simultaneously in the shortest possible time, to clamp down on the entire enemy refuge area. The guerrilla bands are allowed no opportunity to escape.

The entire operation lasts long enough for them to be destroyed. It ends only when the area they have chosen as their haven is wiped clean of all means of subsistence and rendered completely useless to them.

Thus, we shall have achieved a real specialization of the troops used in *modern warfare*.

*The grid units* are the first troops used, to stop the adversary's offensive effort. Responsible for occupying towns and sensitive points throughout the country and for ensur-

ing the security of the main roads, their apparently static mission should be the most active.

Their role is quite important because they partition off the enemy area, stop the extension of the territory he controls, and, thanks to the outposts they occupy and the network of roads they keep open, provide excellent bases of departure for troops specialized in offensive operations.

Their responsibility extends not only to the safety of the cities, but also to the security of the immense majority of the population living in medium-sized and small towns. This security depends upon the ability of the checkerboard units to destroy the enemy's organization in the towns, to set up an effective control system among the populace to control the movement of persons and goods, on which will depend in large part the success of operations conducted on the periphery by the interval units.

The grid troops must be trained in police operations. These they should carry out firmly, but with tact and discretion, not to alienate themselves unnecessarily from the people with whom they will be in permanent contact.

They will be replaced little by little with normal police forces, in particular the gendarmerie, once the assistance and collaboration of the people has been acquired. Then they will go to reinforce the interval units and permit them to extend their field of activity.

*The interval units* should be composed of excellent, well-trained troops. Their basic mission is to destroy the enemy's politico-military organization in the intermediate area of their sector, to regroup the dispersed populace to ensure their protection, and to organize them so that the inhabitants participate in their own defense.

These troops will be nomads, capable of living away from their base for long periods, of dispersing over a great area to carry out police operations in depth, and of quickly regrouping in the event of an engagement with the enemy

so that they can maneuver and destroy the guerrilla bands.

*The intervention units* are elite troops who will seek out the bands in their refuge areas and destroy them.

To follow a resolute adversary in difficult terrain, to move long distances on foot by day and night to reach him, to man ambushes all night long in small teams of four or five men along forest paths—all this calls for excellent training and insuperable morale.

Cadres of the highest quality are needed to conduct an effective police operation, to interrogate interesting prisoners quickly at the very point of their capture, and to exploit the situation without losing any time. This difficult and costly training will be available to only a small number of units. They should be utilized judiciously so that they do not suffer unnecessary wear and tear.

If one accepts the Korean experience and the present needs of the war in Algeria, the commanding general of an important theater of operations ought to have at least four divisions at his disposal.

Consolidated under the command of a dynamic leader, well up on the combat procedures of *modern warfare*, they will be capable of successfully handling within a few months the most threatened and vulnerable areas.

To sum up, guerrilla warfare, because of the advantages that accrue to the guerrilla—for example, the terrain he has chosen and the population that supports him—can be effectively conducted by small bands against a much larger army. The guerrilla's adversary is always at arm's length; the guerrilla's numerous agents can continually observe him, and at their leisure study his vulnerable points. The guerrilla bands will always be able to choose the propitious moment to attack and harass their opponents.

To be effective, his operations do not call for coordina-

tion of all his elements, which are too widely dispersed even though they operate on the same territory. Audacity, initiative, courage—these are the chief qualities of guerrilla leaders. In the beginning, at least, guerrilla warfare is a war of lieutenants and young captains.

We on the contrary attack an enemy who is invisible, fluid, uncatchable. In order to get to him, we have no alternative but to throw a net of fine mesh over the entire area in which the bands move. Counterguerrilla operations therefore cannot succeed unless they are conducted on a large scale, unless they last the necessary length of time, and unless they are prepared and directed in greatest detail.

To the words of Colonel Beebe, already cited above, "A counterguerrilla operation ends only when there are no more guerrillas in the area, and not when the guerrilla has been disorganized and dispersed," let me add, "and when the enemy's entire warfare organization has been destroyed and ours put in its place."

The struggle against the guerrilla is not, as one might suppose, a war of lieutenants and captains. The number of troops that must be put in action, the vast areas over which they will be led to do battle, the necessity of coordinating diverse actions over these vast areas, the politico-military measures to be taken regarding the populace, the necessarily close cooperation with various branches of the civil administration—all this requires that operations against the guerrilla be conducted according to a plan, established at a very high command level,\* capable at any moment of making quick, direct intercession effectively felt in the wide areas affected by *modern warfare*.

The counterguerrilla struggle is definitely a question of method. A modern state possesses forces sufficiently large

\* In principle, that of the commander of the theater of operations.

to fight him. Our repeated failures result solely from poor employment of our resources.

Many military leaders judge these insufficient. We know of no example in military history of a soldier who went into battle with all the means he thought he needed. The great military leader is the one who knows how to win with the means at his disposal.