

The Latin American guerrilla's protection against government intelligence and security.

INSURGENT COUNTERINTELLIGENCE

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The leaders of an insurgent movement anticipate and counter efforts by established authority to acquire information about their organization and activities. The success of the Irish revolutionists must be ascribed in large part to the operational achievements of their security chief Michael Collins, who made it his job to know in advance what the British were going to do, on what information they based their action, and the identity of their sources. He succeeded in this by gaining direct, personal access to metropolitan police records. A subject of his protective interest later wrote:

About a fortnight after my return I received from him, not a copy, but the original of the report from the police of the districts through which I had passed. . . . The fact that such an original document should have come into my hand was an example of the thoroughness with which Collins worked his intelligence system and enabled the I. R. A. to know what its enemy was thinking and often what the enemy proposed to do.¹

This is counterintelligence activity. The importance of a satisfactory counterintelligence effort is underscored by an instructor of Castro's Sierra Maestra guerrillas, General Alberto Bayo, who treated this subject in 23 of the 150 questions and answers he devised for guerrillas. In his opinion a counterintelligence agent was of greater value than 50 machineguns: he could work among the security forces and keep one advised of all their intelligence and plans.²

The insurgent organization's counterintelligence and security program must meet not only the threat posed by established governmental authority but that represented by competitive dissident groups, by the unilateral interests of third-country sponsors, sympathizers, and foes, and by disaffected members of its own organization. It must do so

¹ Padraic Colum, *Ourselves Alone! The Story of Arthur Griffith and the Origin of the Irish Free State*. (New York: Crown Publishers, 1959.) p. 215.

² General Alberto Bayo, *150 Questions for a Guerrilla*. Translation from the Spanish. (Denver: Robert K. Brown, 1963.) pp. 44, 45, 83.

through the acquisition and use of information on the personnel, organization, modus operandi, assets, plans, and activities of those that seek to penetrate or compromise it. It must concern itself not only with an enemy's deliberate efforts but with chance crises of all kinds—some weak or careless act of an insurgent, an unannounced curfew or document check, the compromise of a courier, or a natural disaster.

Compartmentation

The leaders of an insurgency make every effort to win public recognition for their cause and objectives. One means they use is to carry out propaganda activities in large communities. They accept thereby the threat from urban police and security forces, who attend their public rallies and get copies of their flyers and pamphlets. They anticipate the casualty list which follows from each night's wall-painting or window-breaking. They sign petitions to parliament demanding redress of wrongs. They do not seek anonymity, but are eager to be heard and talked about in the market place. They even lay claim to the achievements of competitive groups when these earn public approval. They turn failure to advantage if it can serve to arouse the sympathy of the people, proclaiming their martyrs to the cause of freedom.

They do these things because the future success of the insurgency depends on the establishment of a broad popular base, but there is a contradiction between the importance of security and this need for numbers. Mao Tse-tung recognized the paradox but did not resolve it when he wrote that although closed-door sectarianism was impermissible, vigilance against infiltration of the ranks was essential.³ The contradiction is in practice resolved by compartmenting overt from clandestine activities, though coordinating the steps in each, and minimizing the possibility of compromise for the secret cadres.

Because of the sensitive organizational knowledge held by an area coordinator, the fewer people who know his identity, functions, or business or home address, the better his security and that of the groups for which he is responsible. "Street" and secret cells are established in both the city and the countryside. The members of a street cell do not know the identities of their colleagues in the secret cell. The members of the secret cell may learn the identities of those

³ Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works*. (New York: International Publishers, 1954.) Vol. 2, p. 249.

whose overt duties get their names into the papers, but the reverse should not be true. The identity of the secret coordinator is similarly unknown to the leader of a street cell; each is required to report separately to a central committee.

As a safeguard against possible compromises among the secret cadres General Bayo recommended that an urban underground be divided into cells of no more than three persons. He warned against having cells of eight to ten men each, some of whom also served as chiefs of lesser units.⁴ His proposed figure, however, does not take into account the security hazard to an organization in which one of every three persons communicates with higher echelon. Under this arrangement an urban coordinator must communicate with seven of every twenty-one persons working under his direction. He can reduce these heavy communication needs by adopting a cell of seven, so that he deals with only three persons out of twenty-one.

For field guerrilla units General Bayo proposed no more than ten to twenty men per cell: "The smaller the number, the greater the mobility."⁵ These figures are particularly applicable to the Andean regions of South America. A larger group would find it difficult to conceal its members for any useful length of time from the gossips of the Indian communities. The guerrilla chief would have difficulty controlling his group. And forage is scarce and the Indians poor. Topography determines the size of field units in the Peruvian sierra.

Security with Recruits

In the field, in order to preserve the security of guerrilla camps, the initial training-assessment of guerrilla volunteers is usually carried out by street-type units which operate under the guise of sports clubs. Yet the security of these units is critical. It is difficult to conceal the absence of young men from their villages or fields for any extended period of time. Their lack of discipline, their status as weekend warriors, and the possibilities of dissatisfaction or defection are matters of great concern. Therefore instructors are brought to the training camps from the cities or from another country to work under aliases with students whose true names they do not know. Classes are held at night in areas remote from main settlements. The students are kept for one or two hours at the most, or only for as many minutes

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

as they might spend away from their own villages visiting friends. The stated purpose of the instruction is training in guerrilla warfare, but at this stage the main aim is assessment of the student.

The urgent task of a training cell coordinator is to satisfy himself about the reliability and personal security of a volunteer. He tries to learn as much as possible about the man during the few hours he has him under observation. Might he really be working for the government? In any case can one trust him with secrets? With money—or the lives of others? What is his motivation?

The coordinator's assessment constitutes the first line of defense against police penetration of the insurgent organization. And if the police manage to penetrate his training group they will encounter many safeguards set up to limit damage to the movement.

In advance of the training-assessment, investigation and surveillance are essential for checking the bona fides of volunteers. For this work the organization selects individuals who have or can build a suitable cover. They may work under the cover of beggars or in the guise of persons seeking employment. The investigator asking questions about the candidate may do so under the pretext of collecting a debt or of selling goods or services to homes in the neighborhood.

In a typical case an investigator who has the job of checking a volunteer's background will first find out where he lives and talk to shopkeepers in the immediate neighborhood, corner news vendors, barbers, and coffee boys in nearby cafés. He tries to elicit comments that point to lines for further investigation: "The police often talked to him, though his mother says he has been in no trouble." "He applied for a government job and then went away." "He owed me much money and ran off." Then the investigator will report to his superiors and intensify his inquiry. His search for information is no less thorough and frequently more so than that of government investigators. The insurgent organization has more at stake.

Communications Security

Communications are the most sensitive element in any secret activity. If an adversary gains control over one of the links in a communications net it can monitor or exploit a group's transmissions, rendering the work of the group hazardous or useless and collecting leads for further penetrations. For this reason an insurgent organization must have arrangements whereby funds, material, instructions,

and reports can be passed among its members with a high level of security. It may use personal contact, mail, telephone, telegraph, newspaper advertisements, couriers, drops, and signs or signals concealed from the general public, but it observes the principles of communication which are gospel to illegal groups throughout the world.

It uses codes and cover names in both oral and written communications. It conceals the identities and missions of its couriers from echelons which have no need to know them. The couriers use a cover which fits their background and skills. They set up alternative meeting sites in any plan for contact, and they give signals to indicate an absence of danger before going ahead with a meeting. Similarly, the organization may transmit a broader warning to its people by simply refraining from an otherwise indicated action. It may direct that compromising materials be passed by means of drops even when it has authorized a personal contact between the members in question. Or it may order that personal meetings be held to a minimum even when the participants have plausible social or business reasons to meet; what seem good ostensible reasons to them may not be readily apparent to a police observer.

The significance of these precautions should be evident. Unless the police get the details of a prisoner's safety signal, he can, when they release him under their concealed control, warn an approaching colleague of danger just by taking no action to indicate its absence. Or if the police do not learn in time about a prisoner's next regularly scheduled meeting, his failure to make it will warn his headquarters of trouble. Or failure of a scheduled safety check which requires his presence at a specified place and time for observation by insurgent surveillants may give the warning.

Insurgents generally avoid the use of the mails for sensitive communications. They may send innocuous messages by telephone or telegraph to signal the safe arrival of a member or to request a personal contact, but they prefer to keep in touch by courier. A courier can see his contact, satisfy himself that the man is not in custody, conduct a countersurveillance to ensure that he is "clean," assess his behavior for the enlightenment of the leaders, and give instructions orally in more detail than a letter can.

The insurgents often use drops for the transmission of funds, instructions, or material. These drops need not have a KGB sophistication if they serve to conceal the act of communication. They may be

a hole in a tree, a hollow under a stone, or a crevice in a wall. Or a fruit jar buried in a field, a flower vase in a cemetery, or a kilometer marker on a desert road. They need only to be places to which both parties have normal access and can devise acceptable cover stories to approach.

Names and Identities

It is a common practice for members of illegal groups to use war names to help conceal their true identities from colleagues and ultimately from security forces. Peruvian security police must have spent long hours in their analysis of a message they found among the personal effects of a prisoner:

Tell D-1 that B-145 will arrive tomorrow morning at 12 noon on Canadian Pacific. Tell him to alert Grity, Malla, Maruja, Pasch, Hilda that all is well.*

The war name is used in secret oral and written communications—in messages, in discussions at cell meetings or around campfires, sometimes in formal reports in place of numbers. It should not be on personal documents or in pocket litter. If compromised, it is changed. A war name may or may not match the sex of its bearer. It should not link a man to a trade or a region. It may be a full name—José Armand Dubois—or simply Armand. It may be “Saxon” only if its bearer is not from Saxony; “Quasimodo” if he is not a hunchback; “Stupid” if he is not.

A change of war names creates problems for the police. They can learn of one name through penetration of enemy communications or from careless talk by members of the insurgency, record it, and begin to build a profile of the bearer. But a change vitiates these records. It leads to inaccurate estimates of insurgent strength or, more seriously, to confusion of identities. The police find themselves wondering if José has replaced Juan as the leader of a unit, or indeed whether Juan was ever the leader, or if José and Juan are possibly identical. From this uncertainty the insurgents gain a measure of security.

The insurgent organization, for its part, makes every effort to identify individual police officers, police informants, and hostile installations. It prepares lists of such individuals and installations and briefs its couriers and action units to avoid them. It avoids putting a safe-site in the area of a police or security establishment. It directs a

* *Correo* (Lima, Peru), 9 January 1964, p. 2.

threatened unit to move to a place more remote from such an establishment. A courier is given the physical description of a security official operating on his route so that if he is caught he knows whether he is in the hands of security personnel or less dangerous adversaries.

Controls over Cadres

The insurgent organization usually imposes travel restrictions on its cadres and couriers. It warns them against carrying documents which conflict with agreed cover stories. It emphasizes the value of story-confirming pocket litter, such as a letter from the family requesting that their son return home (a usual explanation for travel) or match boxes from a hotel where the traveller claims to have stayed. It finances small purchases of hardware or food from the town in which he claims past residence, or of materials related to his professed occupation, and has him carry the receipts for these purchases.

The organization creates a system whereby one member of a cell or guerrilla unit is responsible for knowing the whereabouts of a colleague at all times. On occasion it checks the whereabouts of some particular member. It may send a coded telegram directing him to report to a specified address. It may telephone his residence from a pay booth to see whether he is home. It may send a courier, if he lives in a distant province, with an order that he report to the capital city. If he is absent from his assigned post without cause, the leaders order an investigation.

In an insurgency the problems of control are intrinsic, far surpassing those encountered by the government in its secret work. It is part of the secret insurgent's business to know how to cover unauthorized or illegal ventures with plausible explanations. Before he opens his door to step forth on a secret action he has readied multiple cover arrangements. (He is going to buy bread or pay an account at the café. But on the way he passes an old wall, and if there is a sign on it he must service a drop a block from the town plaza. The way to this drop is fortunately also the way to an old friend's house, so he is covered at every point.) He lives in a world of security arrangements and survives by observing them. If the police recruit him, he has only changed sponsors, not this security way of life. The insurgent leaders have a constant concern over this possibility. They cannot object to a suspect's covering his movements and engaging in practices they have taught him to be essential to good security.

They must therefore refine their controls and devise tests to assess his reliability.

Some tests are simple. The leaders may give José letters to mail to Alberto. By instruction Alberto returns these unopened. *Had José opened the letters?* They may direct José to service a drop containing a specified sum of money. José finds in the drop a sum far in excess of what he was told to expect. *Does he turn it all over, or only the specified sum?* They may order José to take a trip. During his absence a team searches his house or room for any records he may have kept in violation of secrecy rules. It also assesses his household possessions against his known income. If it finds nothing it may leave some clear evidence of its search. *Does José report a suspicion that his quarters were searched in his absence?*

The leaders may write José a letter as though from the security police and ask his cooperation. They include a sum of money as evidence of good faith and give instructions for future contact. *Does José report this attempt at recruitment? Does he hand over the letter and the right amount of money?* They may place him under carefully concealed surveillance for a period of time and then ask him to submit a written report on his activities and contacts during that time. *What items does his report omit?* They may brief him on an impending violent action against the government and then surveil its site. *Have the police been warned?*¹

The courage, patience, and alertness of members can be tested by other devices. But the all-important thing is reliability and honesty. In a sense, with this need to be sure of the full loyalty of its people, the insurgent organization thrives on suspicion. Yet the pressure of its controls breeds discontent among members. When malcontents or traitors are uncovered, the leaders reemphasize the rules of conduct and establish new levels of severity which further disgruntle the membership. At the same time, however, these restrictions and controls do make the life of an agent who penetrates the group both difficult and hazardous, and his case officer must have a thorough knowledge of the protective tactics used by the dissident leaders.

¹ These techniques and many other aspects of insurgent modus operandi herein cited are described in Andrew T. Molnar, et. al., *Undergrounds in Insurgent, Revolutionary, and Resistance Warfare*. (Special Operations Research Office, The American University, Washington, D. C., 1963.) pp. 33-34 et passim.

The Uninvited

The insurgent takes measures to guard his camp or cell against those who come uninvited to the door. He extends a cautious welcome to any newcomer and examines the man's credentials with care. In the world of counterintelligence no one assumes he knows whom he is dealing with.

When camp outguards intercept a newcomer they follow a pre-arranged reception plan. They usually take him to a site removed from the main camp. They get his full name, address, occupation, the route by which he came, the identity of anyone who may have directed him to the camp, and the whereabouts of his family. They ask who knew of his intention to come. They ask what his friends, family, or employer think he is doing now.

The camp chief checks the man's biographic data against the knowledge possessed by members of his command. If he claims to be a fisherman from a particular village, and if there is a guerrilla in the camp who knows the people and principal officials of that village, the story can be readily checked. If he claims to have walked there by a particular route, his shoes are checked against that claim. If he says he was directed there by a friend sympathetic to the movement, the friend's identity will be checked by investigative personnel in the place concerned.

Clothing is given the newcomer in exchange for what he wore when he came. Guards check the latter for labels, quality, markings, wear, and travel stain as evidence to support or refute his story. They check letters, identity or voter registration cards, matchbooks, and cigarettes. They may check his health and appearance against their estimate of the wear and tear of his professed occupation and recent experience. The guards who live with him at the processing camp make every effort to get him to talk freely. They talk about the area he came from, question him concerning his likes and dislikes, and comment on true and notional personalities in his home village. *Does he truly know the mayor of the village? Does he also know one Señor Gasco de Barmas—a creature of their imagination? Has he really been in that small bar to the right of the alley of women?*

Conversely, the guards avoid talking about the number, equipment, supplies, plans, activities, or true identities of the guerrillas. They use their war names in conversation. They do not discuss other members of the group, their comings and goings, or their problems.

The camp chief sends the details of the newcomer's story to an area coordinator for investigation. If no information is turned up to refute the story he may then direct him to report to a training camp. When the man is gone he moves his command to another site, since its location had become known to a person of unproved reliability.

If the area coordinator concludes from his investigation that there is reason to doubt the volunteer's bona fides, he may order the camp chief simply to desert the suspect as he moves his group to the other site. Or put him in charge of a remote, unused camp site and leave him there. *This is a very good thing to do. If the boy works for the police he has no contact with them now and we can move freely out of the area. The boy guards an old camp of straw huts and latrines. He believes that we will return and take him with us. But the camp is very far away from any village. He dares not leave to make contact with the police because who knows when we might return? So he sits out the days.* Or the area coordinator may, finally, direct that the suspect be escorted to a point near the city, where he can be tricked into an overseas trip for "training," i.e., interrogation under control.

A camp chief must be concerned about the presence in his area of any competitive groups of dissidents. He remembers that Fidel Castro, as dictator, had some success in establishing state-controlled guerrilla groups which served as magnets to draw the discontented, the dissident, or the disillusioned to their graves. Or he remembers groups which volunteered to join his own but then brought problems of command which he could not control. If he discovers that he has a genuinely competitive though friendly group as a neighbor, his worries are not less. It may not have good security, may not be careful in assessing its membership. He cannot afford to be caught in a counterinsurgency sweep even though he may not be its target. *Once, said the boy, some fishermen gave me a ride in their boat. I did not know they were smugglers. The police caught us all—but it was me they tortured.*

A camp chief must beware of hunters or zoologists who roam his area. They may report his presence to the police. He must also beware of the local peasants' penchant for gossip; the civil guard has long ears. At the same time he must keep the peasants' favor, since he cannot survive their enmity. In anticipation of the eventualities he readies alternative camp sites for use by his group. At a time of

danger he may move his people to one of these or, with central committee approval, disband the force and direct its members to fade into the cities and villages.

The Counterintelligence Organization

The guerrilla chief and the area coordinator have prime responsibility for the counterintelligence effort. General Bayo felt so strongly about the contribution of counterintelligence to the revolutionary movement that he recommended the second in command be put in charge of it. The counterintelligence organization is responsible for the security of the movement's personnel, assets, and activities. It acquires sources to report on hostile security organizations and competitive groups, maintains appropriate records, and isolates and interrogates hostile agents. Ordinary members of the movement know that it has a counterintelligence capability, but not what assets are involved; the counterintelligence personnel are concealed from the rank and file.

The counterintelligence program usually includes periodic lectures on security discipline, spot surveillance of personnel, and provocative tests of loyalty. An effective program which can strengthen the group as a whole provides for each cell to appoint one of its members secretary for discipline. This member is charged with enforcing the decrees of the central committee and maintaining an acceptable level of security. He gives lectures, ensures the security of cell meetings, reports secrecy violations to the cell chief for transmittal to higher echelon, and carries out other security and counterintelligence tasks as assigned by the central committee.

The Tainted

The insurgent organization also safeguards its security by taking prompt and effective action against suspect members and newly released prisoners. When a member is arrested it orders his immediate colleagues into hiding. It seals off the activities in which he was involved, changes communication systems known to him, and sends his family to a safesite. After taking these immediate protective measures it analyzes the circumstances of his arrest. It investigates anyone who might for some reason have reported him to the police. It questions his wife to assess her attitude toward him. It may, if time permits and a preliminary analysis does not warn against it, search his home and examine his personal effects to satisfy itself

hat no record of his activities is there. If his knowledge includes matters of an unusually sensitive nature, it may take action to deny the government the advantage of it—a smash-and-grab raid, or preventive executive action against the prisoner himself.

Each member of an insurgency is instructed in advance on what steps he should take on release from prison. He should make no written or oral contact with his group but proceed to a designated point at a time set for this purpose. If countersurveillance shows no hostile coverage of the former prisoner, the counterintelligence unit will pick him up and take him to a rendezvous from which a second group will transport him to a safesite for interrogation. This pattern of countersurveillance and reacquisition is standard procedure. The safeguards are obvious.

At the safesite counterintelligence specialists question their colleague in detail. When and where was he arrested? Who were the arresting officers? What charges did they levy against him? Was anyone arrested with him? Where was he taken? What questions were asked? Was he shown photographs of individuals to identify? Whom did he identify? Was he given maps on which to pinpoint facilities? What safesites or communications did he reveal? Was he asked to cooperate with the police? What did the police promise him? Was he forced to cooperate? (A man can be brave but need not be foolish, they tell him. If he was forced to talk, they know he did so from prudence and not from fear or greed.) But what did they promise him? Where was he jailed? How does he know? What were the names of his guards? How does he know? Was he indeed tortured? Did he have a cell mate? What was his name? Did they engage in conversation? What was said? Now, where did he go upon release? Whom did he talk to? What did he tell the neighbors? Whom did he try to contact? How?

It is important to know what the charges were against the member and who his jailor was. If the charge is black market dealing and the arresting authority the financial police, the insurgent group's problems may be less serious than they might have been. Although a member who deals in the black market for personal gain is not one to be trusted, financial police do not generally have the same level of competence as the security forces. Their interests do not usually impinge on the very security of the state and they are not skilled interrogators—and only determined and experienced officers can get critical information from members of a well-run insurgency.

It is also important that the group know what its colleague may have revealed of its interests. Unless he is part of the central committee, a member does not usually know how sensitive each item of information he possesses is. He may, like Ito Ritsu, whose red-herring revelation ultimately led the Japanese police to Richard Sorge, give his captors the name of a person whom he believes is expendable.

If the dissident movement believes its colleague behaved correctly, it will order him to return home and lie low for a period of time. It may permit his family to rejoin him, since that would be normal. It will direct him to cease all contact with the movement until informed to the contrary, and it alerts its membership to this effect. It then checks the details of his story through various counterintelligence assets. If it comes to believe that the man has turned against the movement, it may redouble him, turning him back against the police, or order him to leave the country illegally and go to Cuba for "his own security," i.e. liquidation.

General Bayo recommends the execution of traitors in these circumstances. Although this worked in Castro's insurgency it is not always the end of the victim's influence. An execution in the home country leaves emotional scars and memories which return to haunt the executioner. But death by accident in another country, while on a mission for the movement, provides inspiration for those who remain behind. Counterintelligence disposes of a threat and gains a hero.

Instead of by killing, a police agent may be blocked by provocation. *Once we learned that a shopkeeper in our city worked as an informant for the police. We decided to destroy him. But how? To kill was easy. But the police would investigate. They would, of course, know why he was killed. Some of our people would be picked up as suspects. They would be hurt. They were brave, but they might talk. It would be a mistake. We thought of other things.*

One of us thought of something that was very good. The informer was a good family man. A bad person, but a good family man. He had one child, a four-year-old girl. She had white hair and blue eyes. He loved her very much. We often saw him buy her ice cream, and then they would walk home together. We bought a doll that had blue eyes and white hair. We dressed it in white. It was very beautiful. We crushed its head with a rock and put it on the doorstep of his house and rang the bell. We ran off and into a building from where we could watch. He came to the door. At first he looked

around, I think a little afraid. And then he saw the doll. He shut the door very quickly. The next day he left with his wife and child for the capital. He did not return. He did not pay his servants; they were very angry. The police arrested no one.

Penetrations

The insurgency makes every effort to place its informants as servants in the homes of police officers, in police clubs, or with other hostile personalities. The value of such plants is evident. They can get useful information from dinner conversations or by answering the telephone in the absence of their master or by monitoring his mail.

The movement also uses money or persuasion to acquire informants in opposition political groups or security organizations. Since the conditions which give rise to the insurgency also affect the living standards and hopes of the noncommitted, opportunities for recruitment of sources in hostile groups are many. *A little money, a little uncertainty, a little fear—and we find friends. We even make friends in prison. If I am detained I am authorized to offer so many dollars to my guard. If he doubts the validity of this offer, because I seem poor and dirty, I let him see a part of the sum. Not from me, but from the committee. That the committee can offer such a sum, small to us but great to him, makes an impression. He leaves the question open and an open mind for the future. We do not press. The next time he has more trust.*

You see, we build trust in people. Only the police destroy; we build. Soon this guard, because he likes money, and because he has learned to respect our work, and maybe because he fears us just a little bit, is cooperative. He passes information which may or may not be important. What is important is the fact that he passes it. To know that your family will be permitted to visit you in prison is not a great thing, for example. But the fact that the guard tells you this is important. He has taken a step, a first step.

Penetration of competitive political groups is not a major problem. Since these are aiming in part at the same goals, an organization which has contacts abroad and funds at hand finds congenial spirits among such competitors. An aggressive leadership, a record of publicly acknowledged accomplishment, or a known plan for the future often suffices to ease the conscience of selected competitors who cooperate, telling themselves that the means to an end are not important.

Thus the insurgent organization takes certain protective measures to counter the espionage and disruptive efforts of opposing forces. These measures are designed to conceal its organization, plans, personnel, assets, and activities from hostile penetration. Since, however, defensive measures cannot by themselves ensure security, it assigns counterintelligence personnel the task of learning about the plans, personnel, operations, assets, and organization of its adversaries. These counter-efforts are often the first significant contact between the contending forces. They precede open skirmishes in the field; they are a prelude to any war for national liberation. On this plane, and at this time, the fate of the opposing factions is often decided.