

APPROVED FOR RELEASE 1994  
CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

18 SEPT 95

TITLE: Aspects Of Counterinsurgency Intelligence

AUTHOR: William M. Hartness

VOLUME: 7      ISSUE: Fall      YEAR: 1963

# STUDIES IN INTELLIGENCE



A collection of articles on the historical, operational, doctrinal, and theoretical aspects of intelligence.

All statements of fact, opinion or analysis expressed in Studies in Intelligence are those of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect official positions or views of the Central Intelligence Agency or any other US Government entity, past or present. Nothing in the contents should be construed as asserting or implying US Government endorsement of an article's factual statements and interpretations.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

*The military intelligence officer reaches into other fields in anti-guerrilla operations.*

## ASPECTS OF COUNTERINSURGENCY INTELLIGENCE

William M. Hartness

Insurgency may be considered a phased process of insurrection against a constituted government, beginning with initially insidious and then gradually more massive subversive activity, which lays the groundwork for a phase of guerrilla warfare and may finally lead to full civil war short of recognized belligerency. In Communist-inspired insurgency the first phase can take many, many years, and it is during this period that the insurgency could be contained and eliminated with relative ease; afterwards a pitched battle must be fought to put it down. U.S. intelligence thus has a big job to do long before the advent of guerrilla warfare—spotting instabilities in the society, detecting the subversive activity, tracing it to its Communist leadership, and methodically collecting the information that will be needed if U.S. counterinsurgency forces are committed to assist those of the country in question. But here I shall concentrate on its later tasks when the U.S. forces have been called in.

### *Basic, Estimative, and Operational Studies*

Steps in the counterinsurgency intelligence process as developed at the Army Intelligence School at Fort Holabird, in coordination with the Special Warfare Agency at Fort Bragg, begin with an Area Study, a thorough basic survey of the country in question from all aspects—geographic, socio-cultural, political, economic, and military. Ideally, such a study is begun long before insurgence becomes active; in any case it is essential for counterinsurgency planning. This is updated and particularized, when the U.S. commander has reached the scene, by an Area Assessment, which serves as a broad base for operational and logistical planning.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

*Counterinsurgency Intelligence*

Then a Counterinsurgency Intelligence Estimate is prepared, addressed to the specific objectives of the U.S. forces. This usually requires the designation and collection of a group of essential elements of information. The estimate is more complex and sophisticated than the ordinary military intelligence estimate, involving subtle considerations and non-military factors of a political, social, and economic nature. It describes the strengths and weaknesses of the insurgent forces and exploitable features of the situation. It clearly distinguishes between fact and any conjecture or opinion it may offer.

On the basis of this estimate the commander chooses his course of action. In weighing a particular action he has to consider not just its primary and secondary results but its remoter consequences. The complications were brought home to me by something I saw last year while flying over the delta area of Vietnam—several villages cut off from vehicular travel by blown road approaches. The Viet Cong, who controlled these villages, had blown the approaches to prevent a surprise mechanized attack in spite of the fact that it thereby betrayed its presence.

Here was a dilemma for the counterinsurgency commander. If he ordered a paratroop attack the enemy would evacuate along booby-trapped paths into the dense rain forests. If he ordered a sudden air attack, it would probably injure and kill many innocent civilians, virtual captives in their own village. Since winning the support of the people is one of the main goals in any counterinsurgency program, he would have to put great weight on the side effects of such an action. He would also have to weigh the effect of his military actions on other operations, say civic or psychological, which might have been mounted to regain the village.

Once a course of action has been chosen, an Intelligence Annex to the operational plan is developed. This intelligence plan addresses itself to the individual objectives to be achieved and the immediate and ultimate results of actions. It requires an intimate knowledge of the arena of conflict. The measures envisaged in the operational plan may be classified into four types—preventive, reactive, aggressive, and remedial.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Preventive measures are intended to forestall the development of insurgency in the area of operations. They include the application of standard operating procedures with respect to the following: the security, discipline, training, and indoctrination of the forces; public information programs; the maintenance of public order; population and movement controls; control over sources of material support for guerrilla operations; surveillance or control of access to marshalling areas, rendezvous points, and areas suitable for bivouacs; surveillance or control of access to possible points of contact between the civilian population and the insurgent force. These may be regarded as passive measures to impede the enemy.

Reactive measures, those taken to counter insurgent activity when it threatens the mission or the security of the command, are characteristically intense and sometimes extraordinary actions to suppress and eradicate subversion and reestablish the situation. Examples are investigations, intercept-seizure-search operations, and coordinated police and military action. They are a response to specific insurgent activity.

Aggressive measures are those designed to strike at the core of the insurgent organization or the subversive apparatus which controls it, destroying enemy morale and leadership. They generally require great sophistication in conception and in execution. Typical are clandestine penetration, deception, provocation, and psychological operations.

Remedial measures, finally, are designed to change the conditions that fostered the development of insurgency in the first place and so go deeply into economic, social, and political matters. They may be the proclamation of a new regime or new objectives, agrarian reform, other economic or political reforms, new systems of public order, or educational programs, especially concerning the subversive ideology. Intelligence is less intimately concerned with these than with the others, but the civil affairs staff, which has predominant responsibility, would be greatly handicapped without intelligence upon which to base sound civic action programs.

#### *Korean Application*

I'd like to illustrate these concepts from personal experience. In the fall of 1960 I was assigned to organize, train,

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Counterinsurgency Intelligence

and tactically advise a native counter guerrilla force to combat enemy activity in the I Corps area in Korea. My orders read, "You are hereby authorized to capture or destroy, as the situation warrants, hostile armed enemy agents in the I Corps (Group) area." I was both Intelligence and Operations for this mission.

My first step was to get hold of an area study and area assessment. Though these were sketchy, they acquainted me with the general situation. Small groups of North Korean guerrillas, accompanied by spies and saboteurs and assisted by local sympathizers and collaborators, were moving into and out of South Korea almost at will. They had been instructed to gather military, economic, and political intelligence, recruit informants and collaborators, prepare the ground for widespread sabotage to be carried out on order, and subvert the population. As a sideline, they occasionally attacked remote border outposts, killing and kidnapping South Korean personnel.

With this and other background information at hand, we drew up a list of nearly 500 EEI as a basis for the intelligence estimate. These were carefully prepared to develop a complete knowledge of the enemy and his activities. Little was actually known except that he was there: villagers had seen armed bands in the mountains and there had been sporadic skirmishes with ROK forces and national police. But which hostile agencies had sent him? How was he trained? What were his methods of operation? His travel routes? We had to have answers to these and many other questions before we could intelligently prepare a plan for counteraction.

Both U.S. and ROK agencies had manifested acute interest in these clandestine activities, but no one had methodically gathered information about them as a whole. Even the U.S.-operated Joint Interrogation Center had not prepared composite and comparative studies. ROK security files held many reports, but they dealt mostly with separate individual actions. Excellent interrogation reports lay in the files of several agencies, but no one had assembled and evaluated the information they held.

We gathered from the ROK and U.S. agencies this mass of unsorted and uncollated reports and examined, analyzed, and

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

carded the information. Four Korean interpreter/translators were assigned each to a particular aspect of the research—respectively background data, travel routes and methods, modus operandi, and mission. It was three months before most of our EEI had been satisfied, but then we had for our intelligence estimate a fairly complete picture of the enemy and his activities, including his relations with the people in our area. We made only a very few changes when we began formal operations.

The nature of the mission and my double assignment served to merge the intelligence and operational plans into one. Its concept was to avoid reacting on a day-to-day basis to enemy activity, letting him call the shots; we thought that we had enough sound information to predict what he was going to do. Without tipping our hand, if possible, we planned to wrench the initiative from him by responding correctly on the first move and suddenly inflicting failure where he had scored success after success for years. It took a lot of detailed staff work to build the intelligence/operational plan, which called for measures in all of the four categories, preventive, reactive, aggressive, and remedial. One example from each type will show how each contributed to the success of the operation.

A *preventive* measure was to deny the enemy access to our area. Since we had what we considered reliable information about his travel routes, one of the first steps planned was to set up ambush points from which our people could detect or stop him. But there was a catch: our information indicated that the infiltrators had developed an uncanny acuity of sight, hearing, and smell, such that they had foiled past attempts by sensing and by-passing the ambush positions under cover of darkness. We needed some sort of interception equipment to prevent these escapes. We couldn't use fixed or lethal devices such as anti-personnel mines: the villagers, though they stayed away from the mountains at night, carried on some activity there during the daytime. We needed something we could set up every night—the enemy was known to travel only at night—and deactivate in the morning, something portable, fairly simple to operate, and available in sufficient quantity.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

We decided to test the M49 trip flare. Easy to rig and de-rig, this flare produces about 40,000 candle power, enough light to make a man easily visible within a radius of 300 yards. It proved to be the solution to the problem. Within a week of the time it was issued two enemy agents were captured as a direct result of its use, and more than half of all later captures and kills were credited to it.

Our *reactive* measures were conditioned by the enemy's practice of heading back to his sanctuary in North Korea immediately after making a strike. Since we couldn't follow him across the 38th parallel, we had to react quickly. We knew his travel routes (he used only mountain ridges, avoiding valleys and populated areas), and we computed his speed at an average of three miles an hour. Under pressure he could push this up to four and a half miles for the first hour, but over a four-hour period of night travel he would average only three. We worked out interdict formulas and enlisted the aid of all U.S. and ROK military units in setting up immediate-response forces. As soon as we got an initial report of enemy action, our control office calculated the maximum distance the enemy could have travelled and phoned all the units through whose areas he might pass. The immediate-response force in each of these units moved to its prearranged position and waited for him to walk in.

With respect to *aggressive* measures one of the problems was the enemy's resistance to interrogation. This was stressed, we had learned, in his training program, particularly resistance under physical coercion. So important was this subject and so realistic the training that some enemy soldiers had been disfigured for life when subjected by instructors to brutality to test their resistance.

A typical situation requiring rapid and productive interrogation was the capture of a subversive agent before his rendezvous with the guerrilla escorts who were to take him back to North Korea on completion of his mission. If we could learn the time and place of the planned rendezvous we could bag the escort too. We decided to try the polygraph. We would confront a captured agent with a large map of the area, divided into quadrants. When he was oriented to the map, we asked in which quadrant the rendezvous was to take

place. When one quadrant would provoke an emotional response on the polygraph, we divided a large map of that quadrant into quadrants and questioned him again. This would be repeated until we had learned the exact location of the meeting place. In one case, I recall, in which the rendezvous was to take place in a remote village, we showed the prisoner enlarged aerial photos of the village, and after proper orientation his polygraph response betrayed the very hut to be used. He hadn't spoken a word during the whole examination and must have been pleased with himself for having withheld, as he thought, the information we needed to neutralize his escort force. The polygraph was 100% effective in the more than 50 cases in which it was thus used.

The use of *remedial* measures can be illustrated in our civilian orientation program. The program contributed to our reactive and aggressive measures, but it was essentially remedial. No consistent effort had previously been made to use propaganda or other means to acquaint the villagers with the danger the enemy presented to their country and themselves. No one had tried to cultivate their friendship systematically or get their help in detecting and neutralizing the enemy. There seemed to be a wide gap between the rice-roots elements of the population and their official agencies. Though there were rewards for information leading to the capture or elimination of an enemy agent, few villagers in the remote countryside knew of them. Their reporting was sporadic and usually several days after a sighting, too late to be of any value.

Under our program both military intelligence and national police personnel from the counter guerrilla force made liaison visits to all villages. They told the people that not only was it a patriotic duty to report strangers in their area immediately but it would also bring liberal rewards if it led to the arrest or elimination of an enemy agent. They told them what to report and where and how to report it, and they stressed the importance of doing it promptly. We also passed out a million leaflets with the same message, carrying the guarantee of reward italicized in red ink.

Finally, we set up in the village centers large signs depicting the national danger of enemy subversive activities, and we held contests in the schools, giving prizes to the children

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

## Counterinsurgency Intelligence

who made up the best countersubversive slogans and posters. The response was good: in the first three months after the program began, villagers were responsible for the apprehension of 15 ROK civilians trying to defect to North Korea, 4 North Koreans defecting to South Korea, and 3 actual enemy agents.

### *Application in Vitanga*

In the Korea case some aspects of the intelligence role may not stand out clearly because of being merged with operations. Let us take hypothetically a more complex counterinsurgency mission and examine separately and in detail the process of collecting information for a particular tactical operation it undertakes. You are the senior U.S. military advisor to the commanding general of the indigenous 1st Infantry Division of Vitanga, a hypothetical country where U.S. Special Action Forces are helping to combat active insurgency in its guerrilla stage. The division commander is contemplating military counteraction against a recent buildup of guerrilla forces in Nam Binh province, which had been relatively quiet before.

You recognize that command responsibility for the proposed operation is vested exclusively in the division commander. Nevertheless your responsibilities to your own superiors are great: you must insure that the operation is soundly planned and executed, and you must do this by such devices as suggestion, recommendation, influence, and demonstration and by drawing on the capabilities of the entire U.S. advisory setup. You have in fact established a relationship of mutual confidence with the division commander and his staff such that the planning of the operation is truly bilateral.

The intelligence officer on your staff, together with his indigenous counterpart, has maintained an area assessment of the province. Its original basis was an Area Study prepared five years ago by the American Embassy in Vitangaville, the capital, which supplied the following facts:

Nam Binh province is equally divided into Dinh and Moc districts. The western border, constituted by the ridge lines of a high mountain range said to be impassable, adjoins the country of Matavia, which at this time was an independent, anti-Communist kingdom. Dinh district on the west is mountainous and covered with heavy

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

jungle vegetation; the Dinhs are an independent-spirited, primitively tribal non-Vitangan people but had never constituted a threat to the central government. Moc district, extending east to the Green Sea, is flat country devoted to the large-scale cultivation of rubber trees run by two foreign companies. The population is Vitangan (referred to by the Dinhs as "Lowlanders"); they work the plantations. The climate is sub-tropical, with monsoon rains from April to September. There were no known economic or political difficulties in the province and no military forces were stationed there; internal security was maintained by approximately 1,000 national police officers. Dirt roads serve most of the area.

This study has been updated by later reports from U.S. military and civilian agencies in Vitanga:

1. In 1960 the King of Matavia was forced to abdicate when a group of openly Marxist Matavian army officers staged a coup and renamed the country the Democratic Republic of Matavia. Vitanga then severed diplomatic relations with it.

2. Since January 1963 guerrilla bands have ambushed police patrols along the Dinh-Moc district boundary and have entered isolated villages to deliver propaganda lectures urging revolt against the "U.S.-dominated" and "repressive" Vitanga government. These guerrillas usually murder some of the wealthier villagers and take their money "to finance the revolution."

3. The 1st Infantry Division, activated in Nam Binh in 1961, is the government's only military force in the province. The 1st and 2nd regiments are stationed in the provincial capital, Bo Nan. The 3d, along with a U.S. Army Special Forces Detachment, is located in the northern sector of Dinh district. No contact has been made with the guerrillas.

4. Vitanga officials believe that the guerrillas, who are armed with modern rifles and submachine guns of unknown origin, are receiving from both the Dinhs and the plantation workers increasing support in the form of food, shelter, and information on the movements of the security forces.

The area assessment thus formulated provides general background but lacks the detailed data which must be considered by the division commander in determining his course of action. An intelligence estimate of the situation is required, and this requires the development of essential elements of information by the division G2 and your intelligence officer. Some of the EEI can be satisfied by the division itself; others are forwarded to higher intelligence echelons in both the indigenous

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

## Counterinsurgency Intelligence

and the U.S. structure. A small sampling of them reads as follows:

1. What will be the effect of the monsoon rains on the usability of the dirt roads and on helicopter operations in the identified guerrilla operational areas? Are relief maps and aerial photos of these areas available or can they be procured?
2. What civilian communications facilities in the province can be used in the conduct of the military operations?
3. What specific economic, political, or social wants are being exploited by the guerrillas to elicit popular support?
4. Evaluate the reliability of the Vitangan police forces in the province.
5. What is the nature and extent of foreign assistance given the guerrillas? How does it reach them?
6. Identify internal groups and personalities sympathetic to the guerrillas.

The division G2 channels the EEI through Corps G2 to the J2 of the Vitanga Joint General Staff, and your intelligence officer similarly sends them through Corps level to the J2 of the U.S. command. The coordination of U.S. and indigenous collection action is achieved by effective liaison.

On the U.S. side, your EEI are screened against the J2's current holdings and the information found here returned to you immediately. Because Nam Binh province had not previously been of priority interest, however, a number of the EEI cannot be filled in this way. The J2 then focuses the capabilities of a vast collection machine on these requirements of yours in a Collection Plan listing the unfulfilled EEI and designating the collection agencies on which they are to be levied. He has a wide range of sources on which to draw.

On his own staff he has representatives of U.S. Army Counterintelligence, Collection, Order of Battle, Technical Intelligence, and the Army Security Agency, as well as the Air Force's Office of Special Investigations and the Office of Naval Intelligence. He has access to the assets of the other staff sections of the joint command. He can call on the individual service components of the theater command and of the MAAG advisory system and on the MAAG J2 and Provost Marshal. The local facilities of USIS and AID and the central registries of the CIA are available to him. In the Embassy are the security officer, the personnel office, the politi-

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

cal office, the economic office, and the military attachés of each service. The Foreign Broadcast Information Service, the FBI, the Secret Service, and the Bureau of Narcotics may be operating locally. U.S. non-government agencies can also be most helpful in providing area information. And through the advisory system and liaison, both official and unofficial, the J2 has access to many lucrative Vitangan sources.

From this network of sources the J2 responds to your EEI, in summary as follows:

Detailed map study in the J2 shop indicated that the Vitanga-Matavia border mountains appeared passable in two areas. Subsequent aerial photography of these revealed trails and positive indications of recent border crossings at two specific points.

J2, MAAG, declared that during the monsoon season all roads except those in the immediate vicinity of the provincial capital, Bo Nan, became impassable. Helicopter operations would remain possible throughout the province but would be impeded by overcast and poor ground conditions.

The 3d ASA Detachment reported unusual radio traffic originating from three locations along the Dinh-Moc district boundary and from a station located approximately 15 miles within Matavia. The codes used were typically Matavian.

S-2 of the Special Forces Detachment in Dinh district, in a report entitled "Internal Security Nam Binh Province," quoted Dinh elements friendly to Special Forces as saying that other Dinh were smuggling ammunition and weapons into the district from Matavia for delivery to three Dinh-led guerrilla bands operating along the Dinh-Moc district boundary. These bands, numbering approximately one hundred fifty men each, were composed of dissident Dinh and Vitangan "Lowlander" elements who had gone to Matavia in 1960 for guerrilla training. They used code names and their true identities could not be ascertained.

The U.S. Collection Detachment, operating jointly with the Vitangan Collection Company, discovered that the Matavian army was operating a guerrilla training school not far west of the Vitanga border for Dinhs and "Lowlanders" from Nam Binh. After training they were infiltrated back in to organize guerrilla bands. The school trained approximately twenty students per month.

The Technical Intelligence Division, J2, reported that a case of ammunition found in a cave located near the Dinh-Moc district boundary had been examined and identified as Matavian ordnance.

The Order of Battle Section, J2, had no information on guerrilla units in Nam Binh. However, it reported on the interrogation of a prisoner of war captured only two weeks before in an adjoining province. A Nam Binh native, the prisoner had been a medium-

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Counterinsurgency Intelligence

level cadre of the Vitanga Liberation Front assigned to a guerrilla unit. He was pleased at his capture; he said guerrilla life was very hard and he had recently been trying to find a way to surrender himself. As evidence of good faith he volunteered for National Army duty. He stated that Mong Hai, the provincial Chief of Police, had aided the guerrilla cause by providing advance notice of police raids and searches.

The CI and Security Branch, J2, through its operational arm, the 407th Intelligence Corps Detachment (CI), procured from U.S. and Vitangan civilian agencies reports responsive to EEI on personalities, security, and economic, political, and social factors:

USIS reported increasing difficulty in attracting Nam Binh audiences to field programs designed to explain U.S. assistance to Vitanga; it was believed people were staying away because of guerrilla threats. Areas where this attitude seemed prevalent coincided with previously suspect locations reported by ASA.

The Public Safety Division of the U.S. Operations Mission, which has advisors with the provincial police, reported that as a result of a lack of initiative on the part of Chief Mong Hai, the police were no longer capable of coping with the increased insurgent activity in the province. Harsh working conditions on the plantations were causing severe worker unrest, and Mong Hai supported the plantation owners by jailing and beating workers who complained. The foreign owners, fearing nationalization of the plantations, were seeking maximum short-range profits and disregarding worker welfare.

The Chief of the USOM Communications Division revealed that the Mission had considerably developed Nam Binh's radio network by installing 1,250 TR-20 radios in the province. The provincial network was tied in with division headquarters at Bo Nan so that information on guerrilla activities could be relayed instantly to the headquarters concerned and appropriate counteractions ordered.

CIA reported many recent manifestations of Matavian-inspired subversive activity and Dinh unrest in the province. The Dinh were upset at the arrest by the Vitangan government of their district chief, Dong, who had been critical of the government, blaming it for the poor living standards of the Dinh and alleged discrimination against them. Chief Mong Hai of the provincial police had urged the arrest, but the Province Chief, considering Dong basically loyal to the government, was arguing for his release to quiet the unrest.

The Foreign Broadcast Information Service reported that propaganda broadcasts by the Nam Binh Liberation Front repeatedly blamed poor working conditions in the rubber plantations on American pressure for cheap rubber for military vehicle tires. The broadcasts, which claimed to originate in Nam Binh, actually came from Matavia. Although all the Vitangan rubber was being

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

used in domestic manufacture, the Information Service of the Vitangan government made no effort to counter this propaganda.

Finally, the Vitangan Central Intelligence Organization furnished a summary of the internal security situation of the province. Based on information obtained by penetration agents of the National Police and the Military Security Service, it showed that soldiers' families residing in areas under guerrilla control were being coerced to bring pressure on the soldiers to desert the regular forces and join the guerrillas. The guerrillas were also contacting military personnel directly to threaten reprisals against their families if they did not cooperate by performing espionage and sabotage missions. CIO estimated that approximately 25% of the 1st Infantry Division had been brought under guerrilla influence by these measures.

The Vitanga situation, although hypothetical, closely parallels conditions which the U.S. Special Action Forces face today and which we may expect them to encounter for many years to come. It shows how the American intelligence advisor at division level, working with the division G2, can supply through carefully formulated specific EEI the information needed for division operations. It points up the importance of his ready access, through the American J2, to a multiplicate and vigorous collection network. More broadly, it illustrates the essential role of intelligence in bringing a knowledge of significant and many times obscure factors to bear on the determination of a best course of action.

The Communist-sponsored insurgency environment has created a new context for U.S. forces abroad, one in which conventional military intelligence requirements must be greatly expanded to include some matters formerly regarded as nonmilitary and others unique to counterinsurgency, both now of critical importance for military operations. The U.S. Special Action Forces require concentrated, tailored intelligence and counterintelligence support. They require information like that illustrated above for the operational effectiveness of committed forces, but also broader information as the basis for pre-commitment planning and long-range intelligence on insurgency potential. These requirements cover all aspects of a potentially insurgent country and its society and early recognition of incipient insurgency.