GEOGRAPHY 399/590

The Geography of Insurgency: From Alexander the Great to Modern Times
(From the perspective of an insurgent)

Policy Statement

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Tuesday 4:30-7:10 pm Robinson A106
Office: TBA Office Hours: TBA

This course is a study of insurgency as it relates to geostrategic world regions, culture, national movements, political and physical geography. This course uniquely combines political geography, geopolitics, history, economics, military science, and other important disciplines.

Course Learning Objectives

- To understand the role of physical geography and natural resources in mounting and maintaining insurgencies around the world.
- To understand the geostrategic context of insurgencies relative to major world regions:
  - Middle East and North Africa
  - Southeast Asia
  - Latin America
  - Eurasia, including Central Asia, Afghanistan and Pakistan
  - Africa South
- To understand the historical context of insurgent methods and success:
  - Alexander the Great in Central Asia
  - Rome in North Africa and Tin Islands
  - Jewish Revolt
  - Napoleon in Spain
  - North America
    - Rogers Rangers: French Indian War
    - Francis Marion: Revolution
    - John Mosby: Civil War
    - Indian Removal and Conflict: Red Cloud’s War, Crazy Horse, Apache Wars.
  - Russo-German War and Rear Area Security
- To understand the insurgent’s use of geography and technology (e.g., EFP’s and IED’s)

Course Requirements, Evaluation and Assessment

Weekly briefings (two pages minimum with references). Essays will be presented and discussed in class. I expect your essays to be your best work! Briefings must be submitted via hard/print copy only (I do not accept research papers sent via email).

Grading Scale

Weekly essays 20 points each = 240 points
Class Participation (measured by attendance) = 60 points
Semester Total = 300 points

90-100% = A
80-89% = B
70-79% = C
60-69% = D
Below 60% = F

Extra-credit research projects must be approved in advance at the beginning of the course.

Academic Integrity

This class will adhere to all relevant GMU policies including course evaluations, the honor code, reasonable accommodation for disabled students, non-discrimination and the policy on incompletes contained in the GMU Catalog. The honor code will be strictly enforced. Any instance of plagiarism will result in a grade of “F.”

Students with Disabilities

All reasonable accommodations will be made. Please tell me how I can help you.
Introduction

What is an insurgency?
Revolt, insurrection, rebellion, subversion, and overthrowing government; changing centers of power.

Defeating insurgencies (or civil unrest)

- Non-decisive conclusions
- Impossible demands
- Limiting Factors
  - Logistics (i.e., supply and replacement)
  - Geography: urban and physical

Force multipliers: Insurgents and counter insurgents use

Insurgency — the use of protracted low intensity violence and political warfare against a government — has been one of the most pervasive and strategically significant forms of asymmetric conflict for the past century.

In some instances, it actually has succeeded in overthrowing regimes or forcing occupying powers to withdraw from a state, thus redrawing the strategic landscape and altering the course of history. Few other forms of asymmetric conflict can make this claim.

Just as HIV is a particularly dangerous pathology because it integrates with other diseases, insurgency tends to meld with other forms of conflict, be they terrorism, ethnic struggles, separatism, class struggle, ideological conflict, narcotrafficking, or other forms of organized crime. This makes it both a complex and a particularly dangerous opponent, always challenging to the strategist who must deal with it.

The United States is once again challenged by insurgencies, this time connected to the Global War on Terrorism. But 21st century insurgencies are different than the Cold War era ones that generated existing doctrine and strategy, and which shaped the way that most American strategists think about insurgency. The beast has mutated and evolved. So, too, must those who confront it.

Douglas C. Lovelace, Jr., Director
Strategic Studies Institute
Foreword, INSURGENCY IN NEPAL By Thomas A. Marks December 2003

Maoist insurgent strategy: Fourth generation war

“Rules of engagement”
- When the enemy advances we withdraw
- When the enemy rests we harass
- When the enemy rests or weakens we attack
- When the enemy retreats we attack

The U.S. has never won a 4th generation war

Examples: Vietnam, Somalia, Lebanon, Iraq”.

Use of world opinion, public media, socio-political organizations, non-traditional asymmetric strategies and war of attrition.

Insurgent mobilization of target populations through the use of social welfare in impoverished areas (HAMAS, Hezbollah).
Terrorist or Insurgent?

Terrorism is violence calculated to create an atmosphere of fear and alarm to coerce others into actions they would not otherwise undertake, or refrain from actions they decided to take. Acts of terrorism are generally directed towards civilian targets. The motives of all terrorists are political, and terrorist actions are generally carried out in a way that will achieve maximum publicity. (US Government publication)

General insurgent classification

- Former political and economic elites (e.g., Baathists)
- Generally dissatisfied citizens (e.g., Iraqi Sunnis)
- Global revolutionaries (e.g., Al Qaeda)
- Irredentist forces (e.g., foreign fighters)
- Organized crime (e.g., Central Asian and Latin American drug lords)

Insurgency as proxy war

- Hezbollah (Iran and Syria)
- Hamas (Sunni)
- Shi’a-Sunni National Fronts
- Secular versus Religious Insurgent Fronts (PLO, PDFLP, PFLP vs. Hamas).

CIA State Failure Task Force Report

Breakdown of Emerging Democracies: Yugoslavia, Congo, Iraq, Somalia, Rwanda

National Debt: Nothing to sell; resource depletion or disruption.

Morbidity rates high; quality of life low; key factor: infant mortality.

Corrupt political system; ethnic isolation and tribalism.

The CIA report concludes: the above 3 factors can predict 70% of insurgent problems 2 years in advance. This research effort has been expanded in comprehensiveness and applicability by CIA analysts.

Improvised Explosive Device (IED) and Explosively Formed Projectile (EFP)

- Comprise the majority of wounded in action (WIA) and killed in action (KIA) in Iraq
- Eliminate the insurgency and IEDs and EFPs will be eliminated
- Primary users of IEDs: families, cells and tribal organization
- Types
  - Radio Controlled Improvised Explosive Device (RCIED) – most common
  - Command Wire Improvised Explosive Device (CWIED)
  - Victim Operated Improvised Explosive Device (VOIED) – most commonly known as the “booby trap”
  - Vehicle Born or Carried Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED)
- IED Placement Sites
  - Location has worked before
  - Under direct insurgent observation
  - Protected withdrawal route
  - Interdicting obstacles hinder pursuit
Urbanization of Insurgency

For the past 100 years, there has been a steady decline in the ability of states – in particular, major powers, to defeat insurgencies (e.g., U.S. in Vietnam, Somalia and Iraq, etc.). The rapid expansion of populations and cities has generated the increased use of urban battlefields by insurgents (e.g., NYC, Baghdad, etc.).

Urban areas favor the use of concealment and cover, thereby reducing the amount of military power that the United States is able to bring to the fight. Urban insurgencies are difficult, if not impossible, to defeat by a foreign occupying power (e.g., Iraq, etc.).

Rough geography, or terrain, favors the insurgent (e.g., Afghanistan, Congo, etc.).

The more ethnically and linguistically diverse the rural population, the more difficult it is to defeat (e.g., Pakistan, northeastern India and Afghanistan, etc.).

Insurgencies and counter-insurgencies both have trust as their most important need. Break the trust and neither anything to sustain them.
Geography of Insurgency: History

Alexander the Great: Tutored by Aristotle

Major conflicts
- Asia Minor, Persia, Afghanistan, Inner Asia, India
Led from the front: cultured, charismatic, cunning, and cruel
Overran and pacified large populations and territories: Middle East, Central Asia and Indus Valley
Insurgent war against Greek Army
- Physical geographic hardships of the Pamirs
- Hindu Kush and Khyber Pass

Roman Britain and North Africa

Roman Legion
- Organization and tactics
British tin
- “Rome referred to Britain as the ‘tin islands’”
Rome did not completely conquer Britain: focus on trade
Constant revolt: almost persuaded Nero to withdraw from Britain altogether
The Roman Firth-Clyde defensive line; later retreating to Hadrian’s Wall
Economic decline and end of Roman rule 400 A.D.
Libya
- Roman fort line
- Tripolitania and Cyrenaica: defended by one locally recruited legion and tribal auxiliaries
- Occupied areas economically variable or where manpower to defend was available
- Jewish Tribes and Revolt 115 AD (hated Rome after 70 AD revolt)
- Continued fighting in the North African desert: Converted entire tribes of Berbers to Judaism in order to fight Rome

Napoleon and Spain

Close all European ports to British trade
Portugal: Britain’s oldest ally invaded by France with Spain’s help.
French occupation of Spain 1808
- Angry citizens rise in revolt
- Arrest of royal family
- A new kind of militia or guerrillas
- Anti-French insurgency tied down 340,000 French troops; general rising similar to Iraq.
- 60% of all Napoleon’s forces were tied down in Spain
- Disbanded Spanish soldiers became insurgents and created “hell on earth for French soldiers”. They dreaded going to Spain, “many men are meeting their death at the hands of the peasantry”, reported senior French officers in the field
- The Spanish “ulcer” bleeding French military resources to the point of near collapse
North America

French-Indian War: Roger’s Rangers
American Revolution: Francis Marion (Swamp Fox)
U.S. Civil War: John Mosby (Grey Ghost—northern VA-Highway 50)

Indian Insurgent Wars: Mobility, Geography and Removal
- Red Cloud’s War: Bozeman Trail
- Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse: High Plains
- Apache Wars: Cochise, Geronimo, etc.
- The role of ethnic cleansing 1830, Indian Removal Act and insurgency
- Seminole Insurgency: The U.S. simply gave up

Russia in World War Two

Role of geography in defeating Nazi Germany

The Russian insurgent’s use of climate and terrain. For German the wrong tactics and equipment of Russian geography. Arms and tactics suitable

For Russian physical geography

German equipment and rear area security: attack and disruption

Operation Barbarossa:
Began 15 June 1941.
Germany withdrew by 7 December 1941.

Russian Forests (Taiga) Covers over half of USSR

Russian Climate:
Fall freeze up/ Deep cold of winter /Spring thaw; halted conventional operations

Immensity of space — worked against Germans in same way Arabs used desert against Turks in WWI (TE Lawrence)

German — physical security needs on Eastern Front exceed all other experiences.

Protecting rail lines: no supplies, no life at the front

German rear area security division responsible for 5-10,000 squares of territory

Re-supply convoys required to make non-stop journeys. Single vehicles could not travel.

Key to supply system Railroads. Flat cars of rocks pushed ahead to thwart the insurgent’s use of IEDs.

- Empty trains preceded loaded ones
- Locomotives in the middle of a train to maximize protection from IEDs.
- German tank divisions were mobile requiring constantly shifting supply centers and insurgent targets
- Soviet insurgents were quick to exploit every economic, military, political and social error Germans made

Soviets halted all local friendliness to Germans

The German soldier preferred fighting on front line rather than rear areas

*The crew of a Pzkw III [Nazi tank] thaw the frozen mud round their tank. Vehicles stuck in the autumn were practically cemented in by the frosts*  
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Physical and Strategic Geography: Insurgent Fronts

Aridity: From India to Morocco

Sahara: Trans Saharan Counter terrorism Initiative (Sahel, Sudan, Algerian Base).
Rub al Khali–Saudi Arabia

Dasht Kavir (dead heart of Iran) Abortive raid to free U.S. hostages; landing of loaded C-130’s in open desert.

Desert Pavement: Mobility and pacification

Central Asian Desert: Russian image and conquest

Tarim Basin: oil (China’s most important source of oil); Central Asia – the New Silk Road and the Western Shoulder of China

Oil, Gas and Choke Points: Global Strategic Interests

Location and global significance:
Arabian Gulf, Ghawar Field, Burgan Field.

Offshore geography:
Contested fields, Caspian Basin (Turkmenistan, Azerbayzhan)

Pipeline geography: Ceyhan, TAPipeline

Strategic insecurity; insurgent targeting of:

Marine Choke points: Hormuz, Suez, Bosporus, Dardenelles, Gibraltar, Bab el Mendeb

Littoral insurgent activity: Horn of Africa

Insurgent activity in NW China and Tarim Basin:
The Western Shoulder of China.

Mahgreb: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya
Islam: Sunni, Sh’ia, Sufi, Schools of Islam and Insurgent Movements

Central Asia
- Uigher Muslim Separatists (New China)
- Tajikistan: People’s Democratic Army; Islamic Renaissance Party
- Chechen Rebels
- Kyrgyzstan Independence movement

Arabian Peninsula
- Fighting Ansar or Allah
- Islamic Jihad in Hejaz: Saudi Arabia
- Hezbollah Gulf: Saudi Arabia
- Brethren (Battalions) of the Faithful: Saudi Arabia
- Tribesmen: Yemen
- Islamic Tunisian Front
- Turcoman Front Militia: Iraq
- Badi Corps: Iraq
- PFLP; PDFLP: Israel
- Islamic Jihad and HAMAS: Israel
- Hezbollah: Lebanon
- Islamic Group: Egypt
- Muslim brotherhood: Syria

Mahgreb and North Africa
- Islamic Martyrs movement: Libya
- Fighting Islamic Group in Libya
- Polisario: Western Sahara (Morocco)
- Azaouad Liberation Front: Niger
- Saharan Patriotic Front: Niger and Chad
- Armed Islamic Group (GIA): Algeria
- Islamic Salvation Front and Army (FIS): Algeria
- Armed Forces for a Federal Republic: Chad
- Front for Restoration of Unity and Democracy: Djibouti
- Eritrean Liberation Front
- National Somali Congress
- Fatah Wing: Sudan
- Sudan People’s Liberation Army
- Umma Liberation Army: Sudan and Darfur
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Combating Insurgents in North Africa and Southwest Asia

French in Algeria and Morocco
- Maurice Line: Denying Insurgent Sanctuary
- Defeating the FLN
- Spanish Defeat in Morocco and French Pacification
- French Political Defeat and Withdrawal

Iraq
- Mesopotamia and Britain
- Sunni King and Shia majority: Creation of Iraq
- Neutral Zones and Saudi Arabia
- Insurgent and Soldier: Forget ideology and remember the Iraqi’s love of religion
  - Shi’a militias
  - Zarqawi’s Al-Qaeda “kill Shi’a Heretics”.
  - The Chechnya and Afghanistan Wars as training grounds for Iraqi insurgents: The role of technology and physical geography.
  - We fight as Muslim’s and Iraqi’s.
  - Disappear: I have nothing to live for; Suicide bombers, their origins and motivation.
  - IED’s (Lawrence of Arabia’s methodology in fighting Turks in WWI)

T.E. Lawrence’s Six Fundamentals of Insurgency
1. An unassailable base
2. A technologically sophisticated enemy
3. Enemy forces not sufficient to fully occupy disrupted territory
4. Passive and active support of population
5. Insurgents must possess: speed, endurance, a presence and be logistically independent.
6. The insurgent must be well armed enough to effectively strike at the enemy’s supply and communications systems.

“Objective: Impose upon the enemy the burden of a long, protracted defense that will eventually exhaust them”

The main insurgent tool: small, highly mobile raiding units.

Do not approach rebellion from the perspective of total war; too messy and slow.

Wear down the opposing force: exhaustion not destruction

Moral support for the insurgency has to be mobilized among the population.

Ratio of troops to space: 5 times the mobility of the enemy, you can fight on equal terms with a fifth of their numbers. The key to Lawrence’s raiders: the camel.

250 miles between watering, marching at a rate of 3.5 MPH; raiding parties carried rations for six weeks. Lawrence rode 1500 miles in a month without re-supply.

The Arab insurgent is self-contained individual: no need of logistics staff or support troops.

In irregular warfare, 2 men together means one is being wasted
Every enrolled insurgent served in the line of battle. 2% Insurgent Active.

Population 98 percent of population is passive sympathetic
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Lesson: “We have no excuse when fighting for not fighting well”

The bottom line: granted mobility, security, time and doctrine, victory rests with the insurgent

Against insurgent resources, technology and methods are usually in vain

Guerrilla warfare is always on the offensive, always long lasting, never swift

- The media is a weapon of the insurgent
- Insurgents are always organized into the smallest and most lethal unit possible
- The ratio of troops to space determines the character of military operations
- Conventional forces a mechanical solid under constant pressure from fluid insurgent forces.

The Environment

Urbanized Iraq

Alluvial plain and cities of Iraq
Sunni
Shi’a
Kurd
Turcoman

Afghanistan

Pushtun Tribes and Durand Line
Hindu Kush and Sulieman Mountains
Balochistan
Bin Laden’s 2,000 mile friendly border from the Roof of the World (Pamir) to the Arabian Sea
British experience — Anglo-Afghan wars (The Great Game): a century of fighting and defeat
Soviet experience — Role of tribe and sub-tribe in pacification operations
Geopolitics of Central Asia and Islamic insurgents

Pakistan

Israel and southern Lebanon

Largest number of Israeli casualties occurred in armored forces not infantry
First time Israel did not use their Bedouin scouts
They had no idea that Hezbollah was entrenched
Wrong tactics and equipment for southern Lebanon
Israeli MERKAVA tank no match for Russia’s Kornet Anti-Tank Rocket
Israel lost 40-50 MERKAVA tanks
Attacker-Defender ratio too small
Sub-Saharan Africa

Trans-Saharan Counter-Terrorism Initiative (TCSTI)

Physical and Strategic Geography — Insurgent Fronts

Tropical ecosystems (world’s largest extent)

Sahelian Zone:
Black Africa and Islamic North in conflict
Bush versus coastal cultural geography and tribes
Sierra Leone: AFRC and RUF
Liberia

Insurgent Economic Focus

Natural Resources Other than Oil

- COLTAN (colloquial African name for columbite-tantalite)
- Diamonds
- Congo’s Shaba Province: Cobalt, copper etc.
- Transportation Infrastructure:
  RR, airports, roads and riverine networks
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Sub-Saharan Africa

Nigeria and Gulf of Guinea (Nigeria to Angola)

Petro-insurgency and Sino-oil power in Niger Delta
Shut-in oil production in Delta (one-third of national output)
Social license to produce 25,000 trained insurgents. Each insurgent receives a monthly salary above the national average
250 foreign hostages taken
MEND – Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta

Political economy of oil and cultural economy of chiefs and customary rule
200,000 Delta Nigerians displaced by communal violence
36.23 percent of residents revealed a willingness to take up arms against the Nigerian central government.

New threat paradigm – the terrorist threat of ungoverned spaces in Africa
Liberia and Sierra Leone: Insurgent Organization and Civil Wars

Failed states as a security threat to U.S.

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Pockets of anarchy that trans-national terrorists exploit to undermine the policies of major powers in Africa and abroad.

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Robert Kaplan’s “The Coming Anarchy” (The Atlantic Monthly; February 1994; Volume 273, No. 2; pages 44-76): Malathusian dystopia of demographic and ecological crises generating political anarchy and violence in Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Congo and Somalia

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Insurgent groups sometimes develop state-like organizations, or hierarchies (e.g., National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF)).

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The challenge of territorial control for insurgent groups (the role of geography or concentrated versus de-centralized insurgencies)

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Ethnic, or tribal-based, insurgent groups are more effective

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Natural resource smuggling is not always a predictor of insurgent organization success (COLTAN, diamonds, gold, etc.).

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National Patriotic Front of Liberia versus Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy. LURD did not target non-combatants and limited exploitation of natural resources (Focus Unitarian form of insurgent organization)

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Lessons Learned: Gradual insurgent organization expansion, hit and run tactics promote cohesion and elite oversight, rather than rapid expansion and long-term occupation (applies to both Liberia and Sierra Leone).

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Africa South

Colonial Africa

Insurgent objectives and organization

Francophone Africa South:
Equatorial region

Anglophone Africa South Southern Africa
External European influences and objectives: European Union, Rome conventions, OAU

Ethnicity and Insurgent Geography

Rwanda and Burundi
Bwa Hutu and Tutsi (Frolina, PLPH, CNDD, Interahamwe Militia).

Zimbabwe
Shona and Ndebele

Namibia
Herero

South Africa
Zulu
Mozambique
RENAMO
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Latin America
Physical and Strategic Geography: Insurgent Fronts

Middle America
U.S. to San Blau Province Panama, including Greater and Lesser Antilles

Mexico
Oil, Indians and U.S. strategic-economic interests.
U.S. Mexican Border: Rugged and Open
American Indian Trust Land and Mexican Indians
Zapatistas: Chiapas (National Liberation Movement) Indians
Justice Army of Defenseless People
Popular Revolution Army

Nicaragua
Miskito Indians, Iran-Contra and Sandinista, Revolutionary Armed Front (FAR)

El Salvador
U.S. Blanket Security Agreement; Civil war; FMLN.

Cuba
Geopolitical significance; insurgent history (Alpha 66, Bay of Pigs, USSR);
April 19 movement, Che Guevara Brigade.

Dominican Republic
Anti-Imperialist Patriotic Union

Guatemala
Indians; Guatemalan National Revolutionary Party (URNG)

Honduras
Largest and least developed Central American state.
Commandos Operativos, Especiales (COES); Morazanist Patriotic Front (FPM)
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Latin America

Physical and Strategic Geography: Insurgent Fronts

South America (Andes and Amazon Rain Forest)

Bolivia
Indians; National Liberation Army (ELN), Tupac Katari Guerrilla Army

Paraguay
Paraguayan Peoples Army (EPP; Ejército del Pueblo Paraguayo)

Monday, 02 May 2011
Hannah Stone. Paraguay's EPP: Phantom or Rebel Army?
http://www.insightcrime.com/about-us

Chile
Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (FPMR-A and FPMR-D)

Colombia
Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC)
Popular Liberation Army (EPL)
United Self Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) Peasant Self Defense Group of Cordoba and Uraba (ACCU)

FARC rebels
Colombia’s biggest irregular guerrilla army, FARC is oldest and most important guerrilla group in Western Hemisphere. It finances its political and military battle by kidnapping, extortion and drug trafficking.

Ecuador
Communist Party of Ecuador - Red Sun (Partido Comunista de Ecuador - Sol Rojo) or PCE-SR
South America (Andes and Amazon Rain Forest) – continued -

**Peru**
Shining Path (SL) (*Sendero Luminoso*) and Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA)

**Uruguay**
Tupamaros National Liberation Movement (MLN)

**Guyana**
National Service and People’s Militia

**Geostrategic Value: Insurgent Focus**

- **Oil**: Bay of Campeche, Columbia and Venezuela.
- **Tin and Copper**: Chile and Bolivia
- **Bauxite**: Suriname and Jamaica
- **Contraband Drugs**

**Historical Insurgencies and Conflicts** (there are many)

- Indians in Central America (Guatemala) and Bolivia.
- U.S. intervention and occupation (Haiti, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Grenada, and Panama)
- War of the Pacific (Chile-Bolivia)
- Falklands War (Argentina-U.K.)
- Ecuador’s 600 mile EEZ
- Peru-Ecuador boundary conflict
- Essquibo River Indians and Venezuelan military advisors; insurgency in Guyana
- Belize: claimed in its entirety by several Central American states
Hezbollah / Mexico / Tri-Border Area

Hezbollah receives financial support from drug cartels in return for training and advice (e.g., money laundering, firearms training, etc.). It operates safe houses in Tijuana and Durango.

U.S. is a cash cow and off limits to insurgent activities; a major objective is to radicalize North American Muslim communities.

Center of gravity is the indigenous population, who fear the insurgent (cartel) more than COIN forces – insurgent control of battlespace.

The tri-border, or triple, frontier area of South America (Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay) is a chief response of funding for Hezbollah. Over 25,000 Arab immigrants live here. Training camps are found in several locations. Iran has strong influence in the region, and there are direct links to locally operating insurgent organizations.

Chavez hosted Hamas, Hezbollah and Palestinian Islamic Jihad leaders in Caracas on August 22, 2010. He organized the meeting at the suggestion of Iran and Quds Force operators in Latin America.
Southeast Asia
Physical and Strategic Geography

Mainland and Archipelago

Indonesia and Philippines

Combined total of over 20,000 islands; high physiologic population densities.
Mainland: low physiologic population densities
Riverine and coastal populations and economic activities.
Irrawaddy River
Mekong River
Salween River

Connecting link between Indian Ocean and South China Sea

Malacca Straits
Gateway to the North Asian Pacific Rim

Sunda Straits
Archipelago choke point

Pescadores and Sprately Islands
Regional flash point
South China Sea Oil
Tin, rubber and Southeast Asia
ASEAN and U.S. foreign policy and priorities

**Insurgent Fronts**

**Archipelago Southeast Asia**

**Indonesia**
- Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor
- Gerakin Aceh Merdeka
- Organisasi Papua Merdek

**Philippines**
- Abu Sayyaf Group
- Alex Boncuyo Brigade
- Moro Islamic Liberation Front
- Moro National Liberation Front
- National Democratic Front
- New People’s Army
- Revolutionary Proletarian Army
- Mainland Southeast Asia

**Laos**
- Laos Liberation Army
- Lao National Liberation movement
- United Laos National Liberation Front

**Myanmar (Burma)**
- Kachin Democratic Army
- Karen National Union/ National Liberation Army
- Shan State Army
- United Wa State Army
- Thailand : Pattani United Liberation Organization

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10 - Close-up of one of the two Shan State Army South (SSA-S n° 758) outposts (photo 6), within Burma, from the Thai Third Army base of Pang Noon.

www.pa-chouvy.org/ Photos/Thailand2006/48.jpg
World War Two

Role of ethnicity: mobilizing against the Japanese
- Kachin in OSS, Ledo and Burma Road
- Shan. OSS, Ledo and Burma Road
- Mountains and rainforest ecosystems

OSS and Rise of Vietminh and Bao Dai national movements in Vietnam

First Indochina War 1946-54
- Topography and ecosystems limiting French military technology: Lack of technical mobility.
- Transportation geography and the defeat of France
  - Highway One: Street without Joy
  - French focus on roads and lack of fire power
  - Vietminh use of riverine system
  - Rural population distribution: French focus on cities and roads
- Poor planning and French defeat at Diem bien Phu
- Giap and T.E. Lawrence (role model)

Second Indochina War 1957-1975
- The failure of areal interdiction: The Ho Chi Minh Trail and Viet Cong tunnel systems
- Role of monsoon and rainforest ecosystems in limiting mobility and visibility of US military technology
- Insurgent conventional war: Kaesan and Iron Triangle
- U.S. focus on roads and settled areas
- Failure of search and destroy
- Terrain and improvised explosive device(s) (IED)
- Overnight Collapse of million man South Vietnamese Army
- Laos: Pathet Lao and U.S. focus on Highland Tribes: Meo, Yao as allies
- Tactical and strategic defeat: U.S. withdrawal and collapse of South Vietnam

The British in Malaya
- 12 year struggle against small Chinese minority
- Isolating and controlling the insurgent strongholds: the fortified hamlet and rural population re-settlement
- Lack of popular support — insurgent collapse
- Not an appropriate model of success for modern insurgencies
India – World’s largest federation and a Big Emerging Marketing (BEM)

Tripura – NE India. The All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) seeks the expulsion of all Bengali speaking settlers settled in Tripura after 1956.

ATTF is 90 percent Hindu. Rival insurgent movement is the National Liberation Front of Tripura – it is largely Christian. Religious tensions have led to further splintering.

Insurgent groups using sex videos, using captured men and women, as revenue source

The “Seven Sisters” provinces in NE India are most ethnically linked to upland SE Asia and south central China

Insurgent issues: do not accept Indian culture, do not want to be a part of India, and anger on the migration into NE India by outsiders.

The NE is largely invisible to world media.

Throughout South Asia, the degree of transportation connectivity is a determinant of restraining among insurgents. As a consequence, providing transportation infrastructure in rural India may be a more effective guard against insurgent attacks than just connecting urban and rural India.

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Modified by GeoCurrents through the addition of Austro-Asiatic

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Potential for Insurgency in America?

- Individuals and small groups
- Gangs and international organized crimes
- Supranational organizations ("charities")
- Ethnic associations
- Militias
- IEDs at transportation choke points
- Economic recession; urban disasters
- Energy disruption
- Hezbollah in Latin America

IEDs Seen As Rising Threat in The U.S.
As Preparedness Is Criticized, Bush Works on a Plan
By Spencer S. Hsu and Mary Beth Sheridan
Washington Post Staff Writers  Saturday, October 20, 2007; Page A01

The Department of Homeland Security and the FBI agree that the homemade explosive devices that have wreaked havoc in Iraq pose a rising threat to the United States. But lawmakers and first responders say the Bush administration has been slow to devise a strategy for countering the weapons and has not provided adequate money and training for a concerted national effort. ...

Among the shortcomings identified in the report: Explosives-sniffing dogs are trained differently by various federal agencies, making collaboration between squads "difficult if not impossible." Federal agencies maintain separate databases on bomb incidents. Separately, bomb squad commanders have complained of inadequate training for responding to truck bombs.

Local officials say preparedness efforts around the country remain a patchwork. For instance, the Los Angeles Police Department's bomb squad, which responds to about 1,000 calls a year, has 28 full-time explosives technicians and is about to move into a new, $8 million downtown headquarters. The squad has an explosives library, a research facility for testing and access to an explosives range for training.

In contrast, the D.C. police bomb squad's 10 technicians handle about 700 calls a year, but they are housed in portable trailers and must also perform crime patrols. Among the six U.S. metropolitan regions considered top terrorist targets, only the Washington area has not earned the top rating of the DHS three-level scoring system for bomb squads. Regional officials recently decided to spend $7 million in federal grants to buy equipment to lift that rating. ...

While roadside bombs and armor-piercing charges have become the signature weapons of the Iraqi insurgency, U.S. officials define the domestic IED threat across a wide spectrum, including a block of TNT with a remote-controlled detonator; a fertilizer bomb delivered by a car, truck or plane; and a suicide runner carrying a peroxide-based explosive. At the extreme, an IED can be enhanced into a "dirty bomb," rigged to scatter radioactive material. ...

"Terrorists' use of IEDs cannot be extrapolated into anything other than a major threat to this country," Supervisory Special Agent Barbara Martinez, a senior official at the FBI's Critical Incident Response Group, said yesterday at a discussion organized by the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

U.S. authorities have long tracked the IED threat, since the first World Trade Center attack in 1993 and the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995. But officials worry that Iraq -- where the explosives have killed or wounded more than 21,200 Americans -- has become a laboratory for bomb design, technologies and tactics that can be spread over the Internet. ...

"As we saw in London and Glasgow, Scotland, in June, this trend has already begun," FBI Director Robert S. Mueller III said in August, citing the failed car-bomb attacks against a nightclub and an airport. ...

Critics have noted that although the Pentagon's main IED-fighting agency is spending $15 billion over five years to defeat the threat in Iraq, the DHS Office for Bombing Prevention is to receive less than $50 million over the same period ....
The Strong Lose

Insurgencies cannot be defeated by troop surges or force. Military force can buy time only; either offer an opportunity for negotiations or create conditions favorable for negotiations. U.S. COIN strategy revolves around the use of force, specifically the excessive use of force. In Afghanistan, the Taliban have begun to represent the needs of a significant portion of the population.

The capacity of the weak to generate considerable cost and military casualties on the strong (e.g., Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Chechnya, Vietnam, etc.).

The weak defeating the strong is demonstrated throughout history: Sparta vs. Athens, Jewish insurgents in Palestine, USSR in Afghanistan, etc.).

The political will to fight and prevail are key to understanding why the strong lose. The superior strength of commitment compensate for military inferiority

"The ability of the Vietcong to rebuild their units is a mystery of this guerilla war.”
Former chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs Maxwell Taylor

“I never thought the war would go like this. I did not think these people had the capacity to fight this way.”
Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara.

“We underestimated the toughness of the Vietnamese.”
General William Westmoreland

The Taliban are tough and they are not stupid. They will not directly engage ICAF forces. The strong lose asymmetric conflicts (insurgencies) because they use the wrong strategies relative to their opponent’s strategy. Example: Direct attack by Coalition forces and the weak side in Afghanistan (composed of many insurgent movements) defends using indirect (insurgency) strategy. Direct defense would be an invitation to swift defeat.

Most insurgencies fail and few succeed without external assistance.

U.S. style of warfare – speed, "joint-ness”, knowledge and precision – are better suited for strike operations, not counterinsurgency.

"The enemy is a target, when all targets have been hit, he will surrender.”
F.W. Kagan, USMA

Jettison COIN in favor of the broader concept of stabilization and transformative operations. Military force is a secondary factor in COIN OPERATIONS.

Cyberspace

In cyberspace, the counter insurgency focuses more on battling the insurgency and less on technology. The U.S. must win the escalating battle.

Wikileaks - a fiasco involving non-state, commercial actors. Undermining Wikileaks’ finances hindered access to government secrets (PayPal, Master Card and Amazon).

Supporters are like insurgents on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan using asymmetric power to fight state authority.

COIN cyberwar components include: intelligence, coordinate public-private efforts, network resilience, especially in consultation with host nations and allies.
National Priorities for Counter Terrorism

Rely on all our resources to detect, disrupt and defeat plots to attack the Homeland.

**South Asia**  
A sustained partnership with Pakistan with no safe haven or opportunities for terrorist groups to regenerate.

**Arabian Peninsula**  
Defeat and termination linkages to affiliates around the world. Yemen: prevent state failure. Disrupt terrorist financial networks. The single most important source of Al-Qaeda financing in the world.

**East Africa**  
Dismantling of al-Qaeda and Al-Shabaab networks. Both organizations pose a significant regional threat and are growing in transregional ties.

**Europe**  
Gateway for terrorist attacks on Homeland. Partner with the EU and EU Parliament.

**Iraq**  
Focus on AQI defeat and destruction. Iraq cannot manage terrorist detainees.

**Maghreb and Sahel**  
AQIM shifting to south. Destroy safe haven in north Mali. Draw on regional strategy for long-term eradication. Key will be Algeria, and the Sahelian countries of Mauritania, Mali and Niger.

**SE Asia**  
Partners will continue to receive considerable U.S. support to insure state capacity to mitigate the Al-Qaeda threat.

**Central Asia**  
Threat against the U.S. and allied interests from terrorist groups remain low. A watch-and-wait situation.

**Iran and Syria**  
Remain active sponsors of terrorism, U.S. opposes both countries support of terrorist organizations.
The Geography of Insurgency: From Alexander the Great to Modern Times

ON-LINE RESOURCES

Centers for Security Studies
National Intelligence Council
African Center for Strategic Studies
Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies
Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies
George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies
Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies
United States Institute of Peace

Guides to the Internet
New York Military Affairs Symposium - Guides to Military History on the Web
Society for Military History - Military History Links
US Air Force - Air War College Gateway to the Internet
US Navy Naval Postgraduate School - Navigating the Military Internet

Maps
Library of Congress - American Revolution and Its Era: Maps and Charts of North America and the West Indies, 1750-1789
Library of Congress - Civil War Maps
Library of Congress - Hotchkiss Map Collection - Confederate Army Maps
Library of Congress - Rochambeau Map Collection - American Revolution
US Military Academy - Department of History Campaign Atlases

Military News
Canadian Forces College - Spotlight on Military News and International Affairs
Defense Technology International - Ares
John Robb - Global Guerillas
Kettle Creek - Defense and the National Interest
Kings College London - Kings of War
Michael P. D'Alessandro - Naval Open Source Intelligence
StrategyWorld - StrategyPage
Thomas P.M. Barnett - Weblog

Reference Libraries
George Washington University - National Security Archive
GlobalSecurity.org - GlobalSecurity.org
US Air Force - Historical Research Agency
US Army - Center of Military History
US Army - Command and General Staff College
Combined Arms Research Library
US Army - Heritage and Education Center
US Army - Training and Doctrine Digital Library
US Army - War College Strategic Studies Institute
US Marines - History and Museums Division
US Marines - Small Wars Center of Excellence
US Navy - Naval Historical Center

Philosophers
Christopher Bassford - Clausewitz.com
Sonshi - Sun Tzu The Art of War

War Colleges
British Army - Royal Military Academy Sandhurst
Canada - Canadian Forces College
US Air Force - Air War College
US Army - Army War College
US Army - Command and General Staff College
US Navy - Naval War College

Haze Gray and Underway - World Navies Today
National Intelligence Council

USMC Small Wars Manual (1940 edition)

Military Review: "Twenty-Eight Articles:" Fundamentals of Company-level Counterinsurgency

US Marine Corps: Operations Other Than War - Countering Irregular Threats: A Comprehensive Approach – (Stage IV Stability and Support Operations.)

US Army and US Marine Corps: FM 3-24 / MCWP 3-33.5 - Counterinsurgency (PDF format)

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Mapping the Global Future - 2020 Project Report Based on Consultations with Nongovernmental Experts Around the World
Disruptive Civil Technologies
Six Technologies with Potential Impacts on US Interests out to 2025
Mapping the Future of the Middle East
Mapping Sub-Saharan Africa's Future

U.S. Army War College
Colonel Ahmad Al-Thagafi, Saudi Arabian National Guard Terrorism: Causes and Solutions CAUSES AND SOLUTIONS TO THE MIDDLE EAST TERRORISM, April 2008 U.S.
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Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster, British Army. 
**Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations.** MILITARY REVIEW. November December 2005.

Overview of history and geopolitical significance of Soviet invasion and occupation


**New York Times**
Elizabeth Rubin. **In the Land of the Taliban,** - October 22, 2006
Peter Maass, The Breaking Point

**PBS Frontline**
Dangerous Straits - transcript
Return of the Taliban - Transcript
House of Saud
A Company of Soldiers transcript
CyberWar! - transcript
Ambush in Mogadishu - transcript
The Future of War- transcript

**The New Yorker** – Annals of Terrorism series
Steve Coll. **Letter From Jedda - Young Osama.**
December 12, 2005.
Ahmed Rash, **They’re Only Sleeping** (Why militant Islamicists in Central Asia aren’t going to go away). January 14, 2002.
Lawrence Wright. **The Master Plan** (For the new theorists of jihad, Al Qaeda is just the beginning). September 11, 2006.
George Packer. **Knowing The Enemy** (Can social scientists redefine the "war on terror"?)
December 18, 2006.

**ATLANTIC MONTHLY, Robert Kaplan**
A Tale of Two Colonies. April 2003
**Lifting the Bamboo Curtain** (As China and India vie for power and influence, Burma has become a strategic battleground). September 2008.
**It’s the Tribes, Stupid!** (Quelling anarchy in Iraq, Pakistan, and elsewhere, will require building on tribal loyalties—not imposing democracy). November 2007.
