

## Guerrilla Warfare

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Joes, Anthony James. *Guerrilla Conflict Before the Cold War*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996.

Joes, Anthony James. *Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical, Biographical, and Bibliographical Sourcebook*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1996.

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Just prior to General Colin Powell's retirement, a foreign affairs official chided him for being so reluctant to use military force in operations other than war. Smarting from his experience in Vietnam and more recently in Somalia, General Powell recognizes the problematic and difficult situation a military force may suddenly and unexpectedly find itself in when conducting support and stability operations.<sup>1</sup> A humanitarian, peacekeeping, or peace enforcement mission can quickly deteriorate into a conflict with insurgency elements. When this occurs, the nature of the mission changes dramatically. Not only does the manpower and equipment requirement go up substantially, but also the conditions for mission success become far different. These recent studies by Professor Anthony James Joes give the reader an appreciation for the difficulties a US-led counterinsurgency effort could encounter.

In the first book, *Guerrilla Conflict Before the Cold War*, Joes analyzes four insurgencies prior to the Cold War. He then offers today's policy makers lessons learned from each guerrilla conflict. Finally, he focuses on guerrilla movements during the Cold War and scrutinizes their value in providing additional lessons learned to present policy makers.

The four insurgencies examined in his study are the American Revolution, La Vendee during the French Revolution, Napoleon in Spain and the American Civil War. Each guerrilla movement is carefully described in its own unique social-political-economic backdrop. The author then analyzes the counter-insurgency campaign against the guerrillas. He does not attempt to formulate a standard method of dealing with a guerrilla movement from these experiences. Instead, he concludes each historical survey with a careful analysis of why the counter-insurgency efforts failed or were successful according to their own unique situations.

One very interesting aspect of this portion of his study addresses the issue of dealing with the dynamics of compound warfare.<sup>2</sup> The British in America and the French in Spain had to deal with both a regular army force and a partisan force during their respective conflicts. In each case both counterinsurgency forces had an extremely difficult time trying to defeat each force simultaneously or separately. He could have continued to explore this interesting subject during his analysis of the American Civil War, but chooses to explore why the Confederate army did not pursue a protracted guerrilla struggle before and then after the war was decidedly lost. This does not detract from his study, however because his Civil War analysis is quite interesting. Hopefully, Joes or another scholar will study this topic in more depth in the future.

The final part of this publication evaluates "the proposition that guerrilla conflicts during the Cold War were *sui generis* to such a degree that they are of little value for policy guidance in the years to come." (Preface, p. xii) This evaluation is accomplished in three ways. First, Joes makes some general observations from pre-Cold War guerrilla struggles and compares them to Cold War insurgencies. Second, the author considers the linkage of commitment and proximity/geography to the success or failure of both Cold War and pre-Cold War guerrilla movements. Finally, he analyzes similarities and contrasts between specific counter-insurgency efforts conducted before and during the Cold War. Upon completing this examination, the author is led correctly to the conclusion that guerrilla struggles during the Cold War hold equally valuable lessons to those taken from pre-Cold War struggles.

Professor Joes' second study, *Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical, Biographical and Bibliographical Sourcebook*, offers a historical overview and analysis of guerrilla movements from the American Revolution to the post-Cold War insurgency in the Philippines. The author provides some biographical profiles of prominent figures in the various guerrilla movements previously analyzed. The study concludes with an extensive bibliography and collection of bibliographical essays dealing with guerrilla warfare.

The historical survey analyzes over 40 guerrilla conflicts spanning a 220 year time period. The conflicts take place on five continents and are associated with civil wars, major regional conflicts, world wars, colonial struggles, Cold War era peripheral struggles, etc. Although the author's approach to this survey is general in nature, he successfully provides the reader with a starting point in conducting a critical cause and effect analysis of the various insurgencies. This historical review then shifts its focus toward an analysis of French, British, American and Russian counterinsurgency styles. The mixed counterinsurgency record of each nation is discussed. Lastly, the study concludes with a summation of effective historical counterinsurgency measures. Security of the civilian population, interdiction of outside guerrilla support, good intelligence and development of hunter groups are just a few of the counterinsurgency measures discussed.

The second part of the study offers brief biographical profiles of people who were theorists, instructors or participants in the insurgency/counterinsurgency operations reviewed earlier. These brief sketches provide quick but important insights on how the individual contributed or failed to contribute to guerrilla warfare operations and/or theory. In the end, approximately 150 individuals are profiled.

Finally, the author concludes with bibliographical essays listing an extensive selection of English-language works on guerrilla warfare. The studies are categorized by individual conflict, era (in terms of the Cold War), geographically and a variety of other ways. This extensive bibliography provides a more than adequate starting point for anyone wanting to delve deeper into a particular insurgency.

In summation, both works add significantly to the all too often neglected subject of guerrilla warfare. The importance of understanding the complexities of guerrilla warfare

cannot be over-stated. This is especially true when one considers the reflection of one historian: "During this century, especially over the past 45 years, the suppression of insurgencies has been difficult."<sup>3</sup> Another historian writes: "Those who wish to understand and explain the outcomes of modern warfare need to know when they can apply the calculus of conventional force ratios and when they must apply the extraordinary calculus of fortified compound war, by whose leverage 40,000 may, in the correct circumstances, defeat 200,000."<sup>4</sup> Looking at today's environment with mass media coverage, relatively cheap balancing technology and growing budgetary constraints, US policy makers must carefully consider the costs of waging counterinsurgency operations. Professor Joes' two studies provide a clearer understanding of these difficulties not only for policy makers, but also for students of guerrilla warfare as well.

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## Endnotes

1. The army's new term for Operations Other Than War (OOTW) will be known as Support and Stability Operations (SASO) in next year's new FM 100-5 Operations manual.
2. Thomas Huber, an instructor at the US Army Command and General Staff College, describes this idea in his article "Napoleon in Spain and Naples: Fortified Compound Warfare," *The Evolution of Modern Warfare C610* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: USACGSC, August 1997), p. 155.
3. John Broom, "The Counterinsurgency Paradox." *Military Review*, July-August, 1997 [Online] Available <http://www-cgsc.army.mil/milrev/english/julaug97/broom.htm>.
4. Thomas Huber, *The Evolution of Modern Warfare C610*, p. 163.