Hybrid Warfare

JAKUB DRMOLA

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What is hybrid warfare?

- is it conventional or irregular warfare?

- is it warfare in cyberspace or on the ground?

- is it warfare with weapons or information?

- is it new or old?

- there is no agreed definition

Evolution of the concept

- first appearance in 1990s
  - western concept of parallel conventional and irregular operations
  - the concept gradually grew more and more vague and pointless

- resurgence in 2014
  - "hybrid warfare" became synonymous with the war in Ukraine
  - completely different understanding of the concept by RF

Some traits

- hybrid war?…. just using any and all possible means to prevail

- but different from "total war"

- blurs the line between war and peace

- aims to be economical and efficient

- does not always seek immediate victory

- population-centric a political

- flexible and adaptive

Tools used

- mobilizing sympathetic population

- arming and supporting proxy groups

- limited and clandestine deployment of regular forces

- "deregularization" of units

- cyber-attacks against the enemy and his infrastructure

- information warfare at both local and international level

So what is it again?

- it is just warfare in the broadest sense

- i.e. not limited to single type

- including non-military means

- avoiding escalation and full confrontation

- fluid, dynamic, adaptive

The recipe for "hybrid" warfare

Mix together: conventional warfare + irregular warfare + information warfare + political warfare + economic warfare + cyber warfare

- specific ratios of ingredients will differ case by case

- season to taste, shake and stir, and be ready modify

Irregular warfare

- or asymmetric warfare

- or guerilla warfare

- or insurgency

- or partisans

Features of irregular warfare

Compared to conventional (regular, symmetrical) warfare:

- mobility and flexibility, there is no front

- avoiding direct and open battle

- poorly armed and equipped, dependent on external support and spoils

- political, telluric

Compared to terrorism:

- control of territory and population

- targets enemy military and government

- imitated military structure

- willing to engage when advantegous

Role of terrain

- geography and climate
  - mountains, forests, swamps?
  - or deserts, islands, plains?
- international borders
  - where? how long? with whom?
  - what about coastline?
- population centers
  - cities as a specific type of terrain
- type of economy
  - industrial/agrarian
  - concentrated/dispersed
  - modern/developing country

Role of population

- control of population is more important than control of territory
- it is source of money, information, fighters, and any other kind of support
- goal of the guerilla is to take control over the population at the detriment of government

Role of cause

- what are they fighting for or against
- decisive factor regarding:
    - control of population
    - external support
    - internal resistance
- best cause is one that brings you maximum number of supporters and also weakens the enemy as much as possible
- it will differ case by case
- its importance declines with duration and escalation

Role of entropy

- laws of nature are helping the irregulars
- all systems and strucutres naturally tend towards decline and disorder (entropy increases over time, second law of thermodynamics)
- maintenance takes effort, resources and time
- therefore destroying things is cheaper and easier than building them or protecting them
- this makes war relatively easier for guerillas

- the aim is to bleed out the government
- H. Kissinger: „The conventional army loses if it does not win. The guerrilla wins if it does not lose."

Thinkers and theoreticians

- T. E. Lawrence (1888-1935)
  ◦ "War upon rebellion is messy and slow, like eating soup with a knife."
  ◦ "We were an influence, an idea, a thing invulnerable, intangible, without front or back, drifting about like a gas? Armies were like plants, immobile as a whole, firm-rooted, nourished through long stems to the head, we might be a vapor, blowing where we listed."

- Mao Zedong (1893-1976)
  ◦ "The people are the sea that the revolutionary swims in"
  ◦ "The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue."
  ◦ 3 steps of revolutionary war

- Ernesto 'Che' Guevara (1928-1967)
  ◦ "Guerrilla warfare is used by the side which is supported by a majority but which possesses a much smaller number of arms for use in defense against oppression."

How to fight against it?

- in general, countermeasures are more effective in the beginning but also harder to justify

- once they can be justified, it might be too late

- cannot do much with the terrain, but try to control key points

- chasing guerillas across forests and mountains with regular forces rarely works
  - special operations can work, but depend on: intelligence, terrain and surprise, cooperation of local population

- control population
  - good<---> bad, build schools or execute people
  - isolate it from the guerillas, or even move it
  - it's a competition for their support
  - mobilize your supporters

Steps by Galula

1. Assume military control of the area
2. Soldiers live with the people
3. Control movement of population (census)
4. Eliminate local supporters of the rebels
5. Elect new, loyal local leaders
6. Test their loyalty, organize home defence militias
7. Educate and politicize locals
8. Destroy rest of the guerillas

- it is order-sensitive and dependent on chosen area

Other things to note

- people's actions align with their interests, but are not always rational
- most will not openly support what they percieve to be the losing side
- if guerillas cannot lay down their arms and get amnesty, they will just keep fighting
- population control can easily turn into counterproductive brutality
- there is huge difference between local and expeditionary counterinsurgency

- history lessons are always forgotten, mistakes are always repeated
    - because armies hate to fight like this
    - they prefer conventional, symmetrical war

- some "rebels" are not political but just profit-driven (warlords)