

America May Not Be Interested In
Unconventional Warfare
But UW Is Being Practiced Around The World
By Those Who Are Interested In It

"All means at a nation's command, short of war, to achieve its national objectives."

George Kennan

"Strategy, without information upon which it can rely, is helpless."

William J. Donovan

UW and Counter-UW



Unconventional Warfare

Defined as:

activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to **coerce, disrupt or overthrow a government or occupying power**

(Strategic decision – National Level/COCOM execution)

by operating **through or with an underground, auxiliary and guerrilla force in a denied area**

(CIA and Special Forces - Sometimes shared battlespace)



~~by, with, or through...~~

What is UW?

- **Revolution, Resistance, and Insurgency (RRI)**
- **Plus external support to RRI (US or other)**
- **Employing Kennan's Political Warfare**
- **Add in Frank Hoffman's Hybrid Threats**
- ***But read the ARIS Project – it is all there***

Why UW?

- Our opponents excel at UW, Political Warfare, New Generation Warfare, Three Warfares, Psychological Warfare and Propaganda, etc.
 - AQ, ISIL/ISIS, Iran, Russia, and China just to name a few
- We do war fighting very well – best in the world

But we are getting our asses kicked in UW

- Bottom line is we have to operate effectively across the spectrum of conflict and that includes countering our adversaries who are conducting unconventional and political warfare.

UW is under Attack

NY Times: C.I.A. Study of Covert Aid Fueled Skepticism About Helping Syrian Rebels

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/15/us/politics/cia-study-says-arming-rebels-seldom-works.html? r=0>

Daily Beast: The CIA's Wrong: Arming Rebels Works

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/10/19/the-cia-s-wrong-arming-rebels-works.html>

*What the Mazetti and Dickey articles (as well as simply the emphasis on “train and equip” by government spokespeople and pundits) illustrate is that policy makers really do not understand the nature and conduct of unconventional warfare. **It is neither an abject failure in every case nor is it a war winner in almost any case** but it is a viable strategic option if used in the right conditions at the right time by the right organizations. But most importantly it is both risky and hard and what makes it most difficult for policy makers and the public is that it is time consuming. It cannot be employed “in extremis” in most cases (in the fall of 2001 post 9-11 being an exception) and really requires long-term preparation, thorough assessments, and relationships with key players to have a chance of being successful. **And most importantly it must absolutely be part of and in support of a coherent policy and strategy.***

Why Countering-UW?

- Irregular warfare threats are predominantly political – UW is political
- Enemies conduct political mobilization
- Employ undergrounds and auxiliaries and sometimes guerrilla forces
- Subversion and sabotage are integral elements of UW
- All of this must be countered –
 - *Thesis: UW expertise provides the intellectual foundation to develop strategies and campaign plans for countering enemy UW strategies and operations*
- **Bottom line: We do not need new a new doctrinal term** – we need a new strategic focus to develop strategies to counter our enemies.
 - Thinking in terms of COIN, CT, FID, UW, Nation Building does not make us think about strategy and most importantly about countering the enemy's strategy – Sun Tzu

Countering UW Described (*not defined*)

- **Countering-Unconventional Warfare consists of operations and activities conducted by the U.S. Government and *supported by* SOF against an adversarial state or non-state sponsor of unconventional warfare in order to decrease the sponsor's capacity to employ unconventional warfare to achieve strategic aims. As such, Countering-UW may comprehensively employ political, economic, military, and psychological pressure in order to affect both an adversarial sponsor's will and capabilities.**
- **In execution, Countering-UW efforts are likely to be characterized as protracted and psychological-centric in nature. Countering-UW operations and activities focus on decreasing the sponsor's efforts to support the underground, auxiliary, or guerilla force of an insurgency or resistance along with decreasing the sponsor's will to conduct UW. These efforts may be synchronized with special warfare campaigns or surgical strike operations conducted directly against the adversarial sponsor or sponsored insurgency or resistance movement where applicable.**

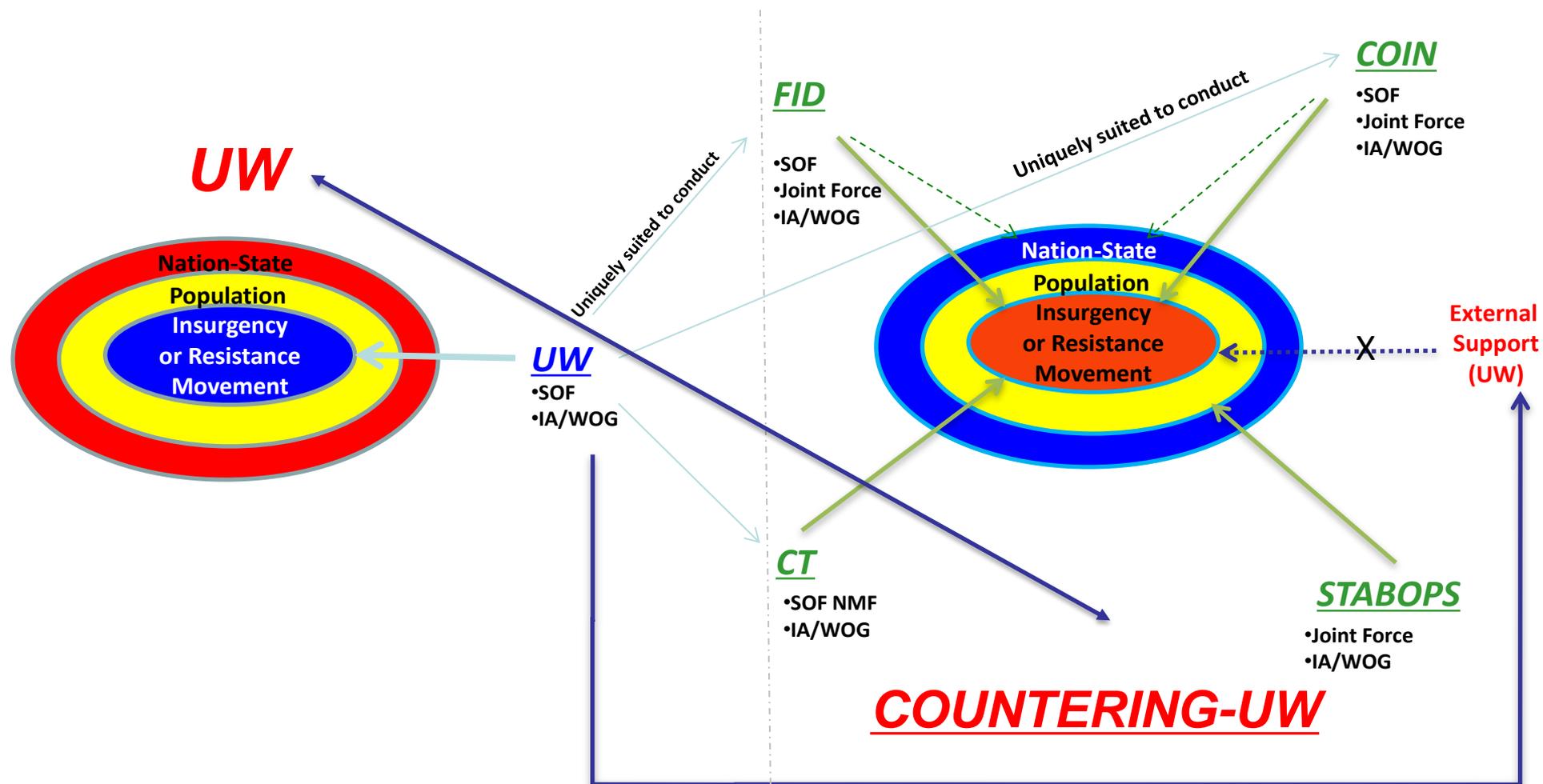
Kennan – Political Warfare 1948

- **Political warfare is the logical application of Clausewitz's doctrine in time of peace. In broadest definition, political warfare is the employment of all the means at a nation's command, short of war, to achieve its national objectives. Such operations are both overt and covert. They range from such overt actions as political alliances, economic measures (as ERP--the Marshall Plan), and "white" propaganda to such covert operations as clandestine support of "friendly" foreign elements, "black" psychological warfare and even encouragement of underground resistance in hostile states.**

<http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/history/johnson/65ciafounding3.htm>

Irregular Warfare Environment

The PRIMARY missions associated with IW per DODI 3000.07 are:
FID, COIN, UW, CT, and Stability Operations



The Frank Hoffman Synthesis

(with apologies to Frank)

Unconventional Warfare

(ours and theirs)

+

- (Political Warfare - an Oxymoron)

+

Hybrid Threats

“Any adversary that simultaneously employs a tailored mix of conventional weapons, irregular tactics, terrorism, and criminal behavior in the same time and battlespace to obtain their political objectives.”

=

Unconventional Conflict

<http://warontherocks.com/2014/07/on-not-so-new-warfare-political-warfare-vs-hybrid-threats/>

Why we do not understand UW

- We only focus on the armed component
- Note relative size

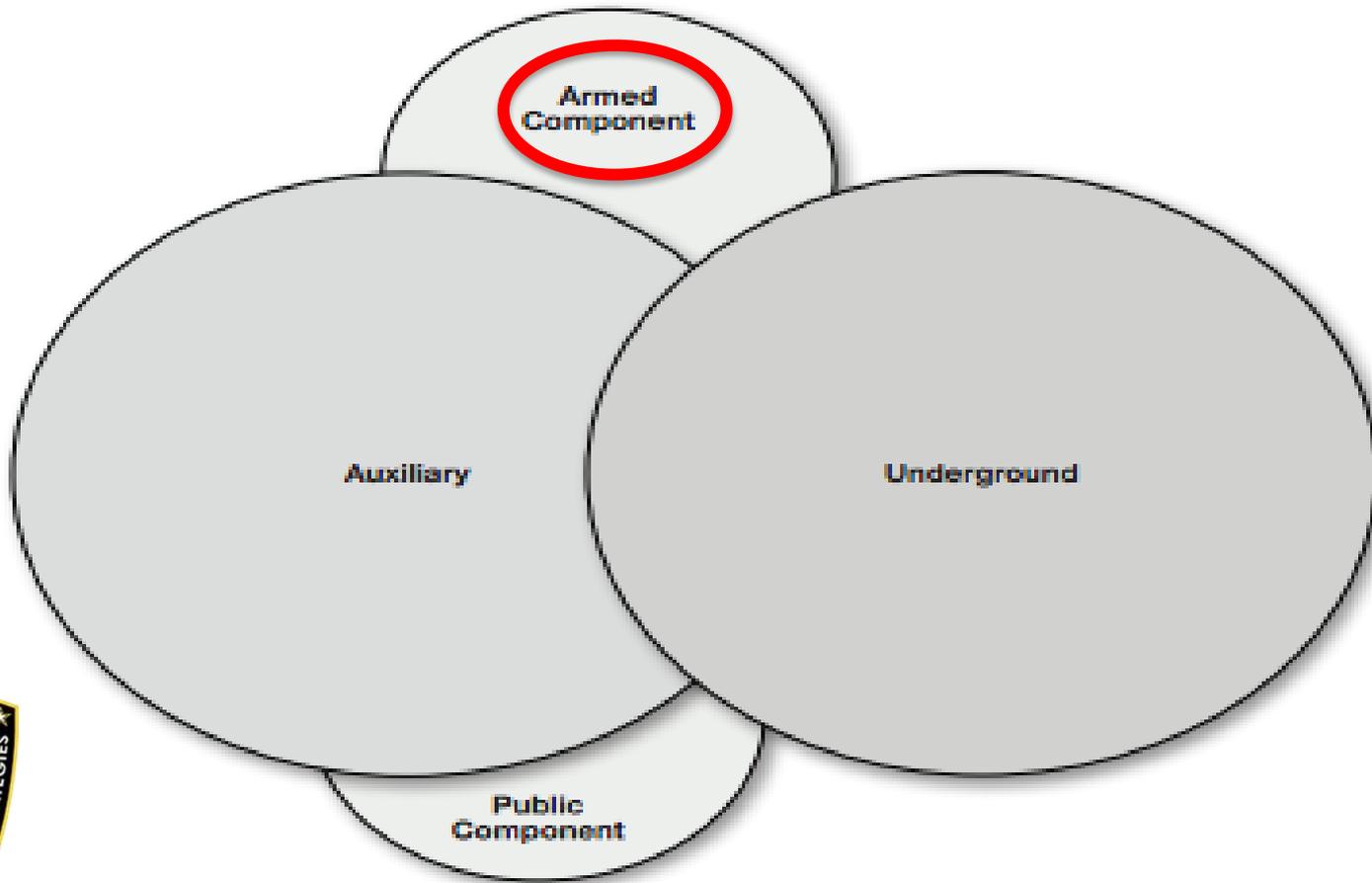


Figure 3-1. Components, phases, and functions of an insurgency.

Unclassified



Why we do not understand UW

We only focus on the “tip of the UW iceberg”

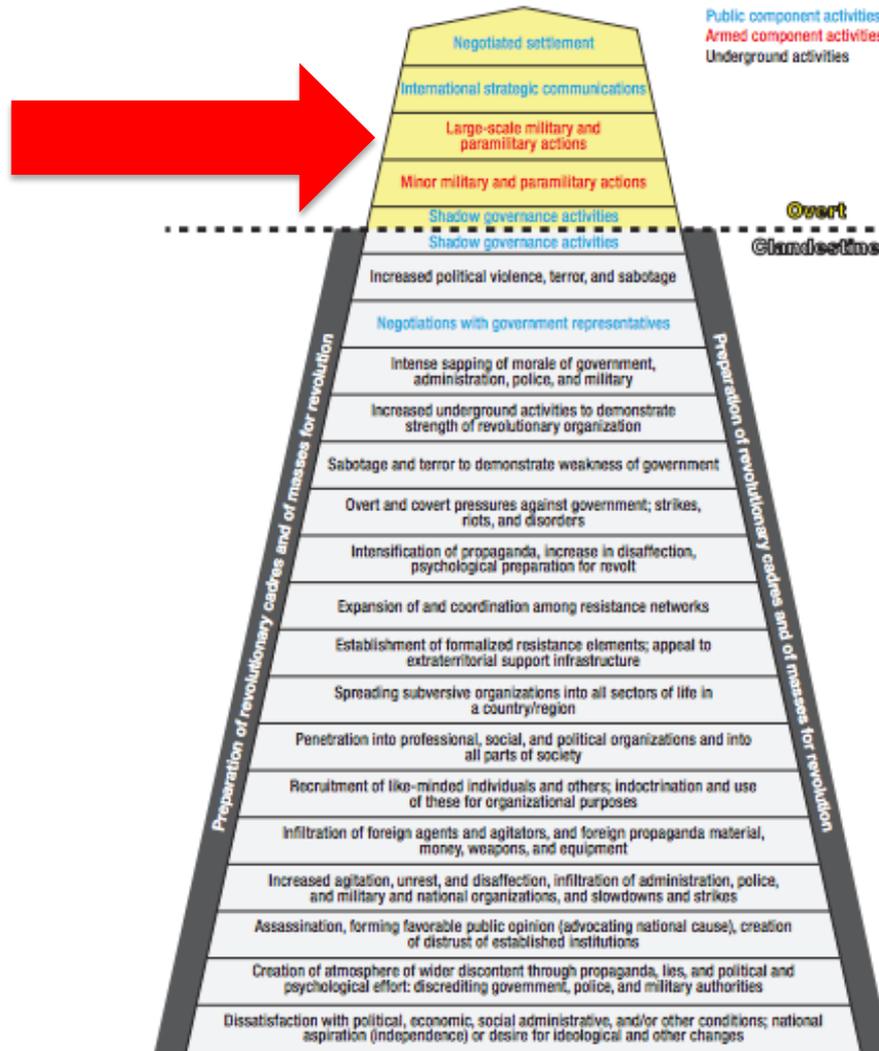


Figure 1-1. Covert and overt functions of an underground.



Unclassified

Assessing Revolution and Insurgent Strategy Project

<http://www.soc.mil/ARIS/ARIS.html>

<http://zimmerer.typepad.com/resistance/assessing-revolutionary-and-insurgent-strategies-aris-project.htm>

Do you have it, have you read it?

Casebook on Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: 23 Summary Accounts
<http://www.soc.mil/ARIS/CasebookV1S.pdf>

Casebook on Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare, Volume II 1962 - 2009.
<http://www.soc.mil/ARIS/Casebook%20Vol%202%20%2004-27-12S.pdf>

Human Factors Considerations of Underground in Insurgencies, 2d Edition, 2013,
<http://www.soc.mil/ARIS/HumanFactorsS.pdf>

Undergrounds in Insurgent, Revolutionary and Resistance Warfare, 2d Edition, 2013,
<http://www.soc.mil/ARIS/UndergroundsS.pdf>



***Any UW planner or strategist must
READ, STUDY, SYNTHESIZE, INTERNALIZE
Without this foundation you cannot be a UW practitioner***

Unclassified



Most Important SOF Mission in Peacetime

- **I argue that one of the important missions for both the agency and the SOF community is to be continually assessing the resistance potential of current, nascent and potential future resistance organizations. By understanding the resistance that exists around the world we will be in a better position to develop strategic options and avoid many of the pitfalls we have experienced and that this report will likely show. But the problem really lies with policy makers who grasp at straws and want to "do something" and then force the intelligence community and SOF to conduct long duration unconventional warfare operations "in extremis."**
- **A modification of one of the SOF truths is that it is hard to conduct effective UW by beginning UW operations after crises occur. (Of course Afghanistan 2001 might be considered an exception by some but the reality is that the success of OEF from October 2001 to January 2002 rested on the foundation of relationships built prior to 9-11 that allowed for at least sufficient understanding of the resistance potential -- D. Maxwell, 2014).**

Conclusion

- **We need to inform, educate, and advocate – UW as a viable strategic option**
- **We need to be able to counter-UW around the world**
- **The intellectual foundation for UW lies in the ARIS Project**
- *UW comes from the past, is here in our present, and will be around in our future. And with no apology to Trotsky for stealing his idea: You may not be interested in UW but you can be damn sure UW is interested in you.*

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UW and Counter-UW

3 Principles of Iranian UW

1. Leave a light footprint

Iran's preference for a light footprint, especially covert operations, has been confirmed on numerous occasions since 1979;... "The Quds Force is not a front-line unit, but functions as a special operations group whose presence and leadership improves indigenous forces on the battlefield." This preference, shaped by its experiences in the 1980s, coalesced into a more consistent approach in the aftermath of the killing of 13 Iranian diplomats in its Mazari Sharif consulate by the Afghan Taliban in 1998.

2. Partner with indigenous forces and use unconventional warfare

Iran has historically emphasized partnering with indigenous forces in carrying out its military interventions. While reliable publicly available information remains scant, these partnerships appear to follow a basic pattern epitomized by [Hezbollah](#), though there can be important variations from case to case.

3. Create broad non-sectarian coalitions

In its military interventions, Iran has tried to legitimize its actions and weaken its opponents by creating broad non-sectarian coalitions, meaning that it often seeks to avoid overt sectarianism both in its discourse and actions, where feasible.

<http://warontherocks.com/2014/06/military-intervention-iranian-style/>

Chinese Three Warfares

- **Psychological Warfare** seeks to disrupt an opponent's decision-making capacity; create doubts, foment anti-leadership sentiments, deceive and diminish the will to fight among opponents.
- **Legal Warfare** (“lawfare”) can involve enacting domestic law as the basis for making claims in international law and employing “bogus” maps to justify China's actions.
- **Media Warfare** is the key to gaining dominance over the venue for implementing psychological and legal warfare.

Russia versus US

Unconventional Warfare

(1 of 4)

New Generation Warfare

FIRST PHASE: non-military asymmetric warfare (encompassing information, moral, psychological, ideological, diplomatic, and economic measures as part of a plan to establish a favorable political, economic, and military setup).

SECOND PHASE: special operations to mislead political and military leaders by coordinated measures carried out by diplomatic channels, media, and top government and military agencies by leaking false data, orders, directives, and instructions.

US Sponsored Insurgency

PHASE I: PREPARATION

The preparation phase for unconventional warfare begins with the approval of the President and/or Secretary of Defense to execute an unconventional warfare campaign.

Intelligence and psychological preparation continues throughout.

PHASE II: INITIAL CONTACT

Ideally, a pilot team should make initial contact with an established or potential irregular element. A pilot team is typically an ad hoc element composed of individuals possessing the specialized skills appropriate to the particular mission.

Source: National Defence Academy of Latvia:

<http://www.naa.mil.lv/~media/NAA/AZPC/Publikacijas/PP%2002-2014.ashx>

Unclassified

Russia versus US

Unconventional Warfare

(2 of 4)

New Generation Warfare

THIRD PHASE: intimidation, deceiving, and bribing government and military officers, with the objective of making them abandon their service duties.

FOURTH PHASE: destabilizing propaganda to increase discontent among the population, boosted by the arrival of Russian bands of militants, escalating subversion.

US Sponsored Insurgency

PHASE III: INFILTRATION

During this phase, special operations forces infiltrate the unconventional warfare operating area. Infiltration may be as overt as using a chartered civilian flight or as discreet as a clandestine insertion.

PHASE IV: ORGANIZATION

Once U.S. advisors link up with resistance leadership, the objective is to determine and agree upon a plan to organize the resistance for expanded operations. In addition to physical preparations, this entails a confirmation of mutual objectives and prior agreements. This requires a period of rapport-building to develop trust and confidence, as well as a period of discussion of expectations from both sides.

Russia versus US

Unconventional Warfare

(3 of 4)

New Generation Warfare

FIFTH PHASE: establishment of no-fly zones over the country to be attacked, imposition of blockades, and extensive use of private military companies in close cooperation with armed opposition units.

SIXTH PHASE: commencement of military action, immediately preceded by large-scale reconnaissance and subversive missions. All types, forms, methods, and forces, including special operations forces, space, radio, radio engineering, electronic, diplomatic, and secret service intelligence, and industrial espionage.

US Sponsored Insurgency

PHASE V: BUILDUP

Plans agreed to in Phase IV are implemented in Phase V. The amount of effort required to conduct organization building will be based on the insurgent/resistance organization that may already exist. Organization could be time consuming and painstaking or friendly forces could fall in on well-established and robust organizations.

PHASE VI: EMPLOYMENT

This will be a series of many events, both lethal and nonlethal, throughout Phases IV through VII. In other words, Phase V does not come to a complete stop when Phase VI begins. Nevertheless, this may represent a planned surge or maximum growth of organization effectiveness synchronized with planned future operations.

Russia versus US

Unconventional Warfare

(4 of 4)

New Generation Warfare

SEVENTH PHASE: combination of targeted information operation, electronic warfare operation, aerospace operation, continuous air force harassment, combined with the use of high precision weapons launched from various platforms (long-range artillery, and weapons based on new physical principles, including microwaves, radiation, non-lethal biological weapons).

EIGHTH PHASE: roll over the remaining points of resistance and destroy surviving enemy units by special operations conducted by reconnaissance units to spot which enemy units have survived and transmit their coordinates to the attacker's missile and artillery units; fire barrages to annihilate the defender's resisting army units by effective advanced weapons; airdrop operations to surround points of resistance; and territory mopping-up operations by ground troops.

US Sponsored Insurgency

PHASE VII: TRANSITION

When unconventional warfare ends in overthrow of a state or liberation of occupied territory and leads to a new government, Phase VII will include those activities contributing to the promotion of the new government's legitimacy. In such cases, the unconventional warfare effort transitions to foreign internal defense at some point.

Russia versus US

Unconventional Warfare

- US UW is very tactical, narrow, and limited
 - SOF focused
- Russian UW is joint and interagency and employs conventional as well as special operations forces
 - SOF and Conventional and Diplomatic and Economic focus
 - Broader tasks – e.g., no fly zones, blockades, EW, deception, propaganda
- US 7 phases – “How to” for SF/SOF
- Russian 8 phases – *an outline for strategic employment and more than SOF*

*Neither USASOC nor the Army endorses any statements made in the websites referenced in this presented.