

Mao Tse-tung Reference Archive

On Guerrilla Warfare

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Written by Mao in 1937, when Japanese imperialists occupied all of China, this book served as an instruction manual for guerrilla fighting, written based on more than a decade of personal experience by Mao. Based on the basic strategy and tactics of warfare as described by [Sun-tzu](#), Mao stresses the importance of guerrilla warfare tactics in a revolutionary war, emphasizing that they must be combined in conjunction with conventional warfare tactics.

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Mao Tse-tung On Guerrilla Warfare

1. What Is Guerrilla Warfare?

In a war of revolutionary character, guerrilla operations are a necessary part. This is particularly true in war waged for the emancipation of a people who inhabit a vast nation. China is such a nation, a nation whose techniques are undeveloped and whose communications are poor. She finds herself confronted with a strong and victorious Japanese imperialism. Under these circumstances, the development of the type of guerrilla warfare characterized by the quality of mass is both necessary and natural. This warfare must be developed to an unprecedented degree and it must co-ordinate with the operations of our regular armies. If we fail to do this, we will find it difficult to defeat the enemy.

These guerrilla operations must not be considered as an independent form of warfare. They are but one step in the total war, one aspect of the revolutionary struggle. They are the inevitable result of the clash between oppressor and oppressed when the latter reach the limits of their endurance. In our case, these hostilities began at a time when the people were unable to endure any more from the Japanese imperialists. Lenin, in *People and Revolution*, ^[A] said: 'A people's insurrection and a people's revolution are not only natural but inevitable.' We consider guerrilla operations as but one aspect of our total or mass war because they, lacking the quality of independence, are of themselves incapable of providing a solution to the struggle.

Guerrilla warfare has qualities and objectives peculiar to itself. It is a weapon that a nation inferior in arms and military equipment may employ against a more powerful aggressor nation. When the invader pierces deep into the heart of the weaker country and occupies her territory in a cruel and oppressive manner, there is no doubt that conditions of terrain, climate, and society in general offer obstacles to his progress

and may be used to advantage by those who oppose him. In guerrilla warfare we turn these advantages to the purpose of resisting and defeating the enemy.

During the progress of hostilities, guerrillas gradually develop into orthodox forces that operate in conjunction with other units of the regular army. Thus the regularly organized troops, those guerrillas who have attained that status, and those who have not reached that level of development combine to form the military power of a national revolutionary war. There can be no doubt that the ultimate result of this will be victory.

Both in its development and in its method of application, guerrilla warfare has certain distinctive characteristics. We first will discuss the relationship of guerrilla warfare to national policy. Because ours is the resistance of a semi colonial country against an imperialism, our hostilities must have a clearly defined political goal and firmly established political responsibilities. Our basic policy is the creation of a national united anti-Japanese front. This policy we pursue in order to gain our political goal, which is the complete emancipation of the Chinese people. There are certain fundamental steps necessary in the realization of this policy, to wit:

1. Arousing and organizing the people.
2. Achieving internal unification politically.
3. Establishing bases.
4. Equipping forces.
5. Recovering national strength.
6. Destroying enemy's national strength.
7. Regaining lost territories.

There is no reason to consider guerrilla warfare separately from national policy. On the contrary, it must be organized and conducted in complete accord with national anti-Japanese policy. It is only who misinterpret guerrilla action who say, as does Jen Ch'i Shan, "The question of guerrilla hostilities is purely a military matter and not a political one." Those who maintain this simple point of view have lost sight of the political goal and the political effects of guerrilla action. Such a simple point of view

will cause the people to lose confidence and will result in our defeat.

What is the relationship of guerrilla warfare to the people? Without a political goal, guerrilla warfare must fail, as it must, if its political objectives do not coincide with the aspirations of the people and their sympathy, co-operation, and assistance cannot be gained. The essence of guerrilla warfare is thus revolutionary in character. On the other hand, in a war of counter-revolutionary nature, there is no place for guerrilla hostilities. Because guerrilla warfare basically derives from the masses and is supported by them, it can neither exist nor flourish if it separates itself from their sympathies and co-operation. There are those who do not comprehend guerrilla action, and who therefore do not understand the distinguishing qualities of a people's guerrilla war, who say: 'Only regular troops can carry on guerrilla operations.' There are others who, because they do not believe in the ultimate success of guerrilla action, mistakenly say: 'Guerrilla warfare is an insignificant and highly specialized type of operation in which there is no place for the masses of the people' (Jen Ch'i Shan). Then there are those who ridicule the masses and undermine resistance by wildly asserting that the people have no understanding of the war of resistance (Yeh Ch'ing, for one). The moment that this war of resistance dissociates itself from the masses of the people is the precise moment that it dissociates itself from hope of ultimate victory over the Japanese.

What is the organization for guerrilla warfare? Though all guerrilla bands that spring from the masses of the people suffer from lack of organization at the time of their formation, they all have in common a basic quality that makes organization possible. All guerrilla units must have political and military leadership. This is true regardless of the source or size of such units. Such units may originate locally, in the masses of the people; they may be formed from an admixture of regular troops with groups of the people, or they may consist of regular army units intact. And mere quantity does not affect this matter. Such units may consist of a squad of a few men, a battalion of several hundred men, or a regiment of several thousand men.

All these must have leaders who are unyielding in their policies—resolute, loyal, sincere, and robust. These men must be well-educated in revolutionary technique, self

confident, able to establish severe discipline, and able to cope with counter-propaganda. In short, these leaders must be models for the people. As the war progresses, such leaders lack of discipline which at first will gradually overcome the lack of discipline which at first prevails; they will establish discipline in their forces, strengthening them and increasing their combat efficiency. Thus eventual victory will be attained.

Unorganized guerrilla warfare cannot contribute to victory and those who attack the movement as a combination of banditry and anarchism do not understand the nature of guerrilla action. They say, 'This movement is a haven for disappointed militarists, vagabonds, and bandits' (Jen Ch'i Shan), hoping thus to bring the movement into disrepute. We do not deny that there are corrupt guerrillas, nor that there are people who under the guise of guerrillas indulge in unlawful activities. Neither do we deny that the movement has at the present time symptoms of a lack of organization, symptoms that might indeed be serious were we to judge guerrilla warfare solely by the corrupt and temporary phenomena we have mentioned. We should study the corrupt phenomena and attempt to eradicate them in order to encourage guerrilla warfare, and to increase its military efficiency. 'This is hard work, there is no help for it, and the problem cannot be solved immediately. The whole people must try to reform themselves during the course of the war. We must educate them and reform them in the light of past experience. Evil does not exist in guerrilla warfare but only in the unorganized and undisciplined activities that are anarchism,' said Lenin, in *On Guerrilla Warfare*. ^[B]

What is basic guerrilla strategy? Guerrilla strategy must be based primarily on alertness, mobility, and attack. It must be adjusted to the enemy situation, the terrain, the existing lines of communication, the relative strengths, the weather and the situation of the people.

In guerrilla warfare, select the tactic of seeming to come from the east and attacking from the west; avoid the solid, attack the hollow; attack; withdraw; deliver a lightning blow, seek a lightning decision. When guerrillas engage a stronger enemy, they withdraw when he advances; harass him when he stops; strike him when he is weary;

pursue him when he withdraws. In guerilla strategy, the enemy's rear, flanks, and other vulnerable spots are his vital points, and there he must be harassed, attacked, dispersed, exhausted and annihilated. Only in this way can guerrillas carry out their mission of independent guerrilla action and coordination with the effort of the regular armies. But, in spite of the most complete preparation, there can be no victory if mistakes are made in the matter of command. Guerilla warfare based on the principles we have mentioned and carried out over a vast extent of territory in which communications are inconvenient will contribute tremendously towards ultimate defeat of the Japanese and consequent emancipation of the Chinese people.

A careful distinction must be made between two types of guerrilla warfare. The fact that revolutionary guerrilla warfare is based on the masses of the people does not in itself mean that the organization of guerrilla units is impossible in a war of counter-revolutionary character. As examples of the former type we may cite Red guerilla hostilities during the Russian Revolution; those of the Reds China; of the Abyssinians against the Italians for the past three years; those of the last seven years in Manchuria, and the vast anti-Japanese guerrilla war that is carried on in China today. All these struggles have been carried on in the interest of the whole people or the greater part of them; all had a broad basis in the national manpower and all have been in accord with the laws of historical development. They have existed and will continue to exist, flourish, and develop as long as they are not contrary to national policy.

The second type of guerrilla warfare directly contradicts the law of historical development. Of this type, we may cite the examples furnished by the White Russian guerrilla units organized by Denikin and Kolchak; those organized by the Japanese; those organized by the Italians in Abyssinia; those supported by the puppet governments in Manchuria and Mongolia, and those that will be organized here by Chinese traitors. All such have oppressed the masses and have been contrary to the true interests of the people. They must be firmly opposed. They are easy to destroy because they lack a broad foundation in the people.

If we fail to differentiate between the two types of guerrilla hostilities mentioned, it is

likely that we will exaggerate their effect when applied by an invader. We might arrive at the conclusion that 'the invader can organize guerrilla units from among the people'. Such a conclusion might well diminish our confidence in guerrilla warfare. As far as this matter is concerned, we have but to remember the historical experience of revolutionary struggles.

Further, we must distinguish general revolutionary wars from those of a purely 'class' type. In the former case, the whole people of a nation, without regard to class or party, carry on a guerrilla struggle that is an instrument of the national policy. Its basis is, therefore, much broader than is the basis of a struggle of class type. Of a general guerrilla war, it has been said: 'When a nation is invaded, the people become sympathetic to one another and all aid in organizing guerrilla units. In civil war, no matter to what extent guerrillas are developed, they do not produce the same results as when they are formed to resist an invasion by foreigners' (*Civil War in Russia*). The one strong feature of guerrilla warfare in a civil struggle is its quality of internal purity. One class may be easily united and perhaps fight with great effect, whereas in a national revolutionary war, guerrilla units are faced with the problem of internal unification of different class groups. This necessitates the use of propaganda. Both types of guerrilla war are, however, similar in that they both employ the same military methods.

National guerrilla warfare, though historically of the same consistency, has employed varying implements as times, peoples, and conditions differ. The guerrilla aspects of the Opium War, those of the fighting in Manchuria since the Mukden incident, and those employed in China today are all slightly different. The guerrilla warfare conducted by the Moroccans against the French and the Spanish was not exactly similar to that which we conduct today in China. These differences express the characteristics of different peoples in different periods. Although there is a general similarity in the quality of all these struggles, there are dissimilarities in form. This fact we must recognize. Clausewitz wrote, in *On War*: 'Wars in every period have independent forms and independent conditions, and, therefore, every period must have its independent theory of war.' Lenin, in *On Guerrilla Warfare* said: 'As regards the form of fighting, it is unconditionally requisite that history be investigated in

order to discover the conditions of environment, the state of economic progress and the political ideas that obtained, the national characteristics, customs, and degree of civilization.' Again: 'It is necessary to be completely unsympathetic to abstract formulas and rules and to study with sympathy the conditions of the actual fighting, for these will change in accordance with the political and economic situations and the realization of the people's aspirations. These progressive changes in conditions create new methods.'

If, in today's struggle, we fail to apply the historical truths of revolutionary guerrilla war, we will fall into the error of believing with T'ou Hsi Sheng that under the impact of Japan's mechanized army, 'the guerrilla unit has lost its historical function'. Jen Ch'i Shan writes: 'In olden days guerrilla warfare was part of regular strategy but there is almost no chance that it can be applied today.' These opinions are harmful. If we do not make an estimate of the characteristics peculiar to our anti-Japanese guerrilla war, but insist on applying to it mechanical formulas derived from past history, we are making the mistake of placing our hostilities in the same category as all other national guerrilla struggles. If we hold this view, we will simply be beating our heads against a stone wall and we will be unable to profit from guerrilla hostilities.

To summarize: What is the guerrilla war of resistance against Japan? It is one aspect of the entire war, which, although alone incapable of producing the decision, attacks the enemy in every quarter, diminishes the extent of area under his control, increases our national strength, and assists our regular armies. It is one of the strategic instruments used to inflict defeat on our enemy. It is the one pure expression of anti-Japanese policy, that is to say, it is military strength organized by the active people and inseparable from them. It is a powerful special weapon with which we resist the Japanese and without which we cannot defeat them.

Chapter 2: The Relation Of Guerrilla Hostilities to Regular Operations

[\[A\]](#) A document by this name was not written by Lenin.

[\[B\]](#) This is a misquotation. No passage resembling this is in Lenin's [Guerrilla Warfare](#).

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Mao Tse-tung On Guerrilla Warfare

2. The Relation Of Guerrilla Hostilities to Regular Operations

The general features of orthodox hostilities, that is, the war of position and the war of movement, differ fundamentally from guerrilla warfare. There are other readily apparent differences such as those in organization, armament, equipment supply, tactics, command; in conception of the terms 'front' and 'rear'; in the matter of military responsibilities.

When considered from the point of view of total numbers, guerrilla units are many, as individual combat units, they may vary in size from the smallest, of several score or several hundred men, to the battalion or the regiment, of several thousand. This is not the case in regularly organized units. A primary feature of guerrilla operations is their dependence upon the people themselves to organize battalions and other units. As a result of this, organization depends largely upon local circumstances. In the case of guerrilla groups, the standard of equipment is of a low order and they must depend for their sustenance primarily upon what the locality affords.

The strategy of guerrilla warfare is manifestly unlike that employed in orthodox operations, as the basic tactic of the former is constant activity and movement. There is in guerrilla warfare no such thing as a decisive battle; there is nothing comparable to the fixed, passive defence that characterizes orthodox war. In guerrilla warfare, the transformation of a moving situation into a positional defensive situation never arises. The general features of reconnaissance, partial deployment, general deployment, and development of the attack that are usual in mobile warfare are not common in guerrilla war.

There are differences also in the matter of leadership and command. In guerrilla warfare, small units acting independently play the principal role and there must be no excessive interference with their activities. In orthodox warfare particularly in a moving situation, a certain degree of initiative is accorded subordinates, but in principle, command is centralized. This is done because all units and all supporting arms in all districts must co-ordinate to the highest degree. In the case of guerrilla warfare, this is not only undesirable but impossible. Only adjacent guerrilla units can coordinate their activities to any degree. Strategically, their activities can be roughly correlated with those of the regular forces, and tactically, they must co-operate with adjacent units of the regular army. But there are no strictures on the extent of guerrilla activity nor is it primarily characterized by the quality of co-operation of many units.

When we discuss the terms 'front' and 'rear' it must be remembered, that while guerrillas do have bases, their primary field of activity is in the enemy's rear areas. They themselves have no rear. Because an orthodox army has rear installations (except in some special cases as during the 10,000-mile Long march of the Red Army or as in the case of certain units operating in Shansi Province), it cannot operate as guerrillas can.

As to the matter of military responsibilities, those of the guerrillas are to exterminate small forces of the enemy; to harass and weaken large forces; to attack enemy lines of communications; to establish bases capable of supporting independent operations in the enemy's rear, to force the enemy to disperse his strength; and to co-ordinate all these activities with those of the regular armies on distant battle fronts.

From the foregoing summary of differences that exist between guerrilla warfare and orthodox warfare, it can be seen that it is improper to compare the two. Further distinction must be made in order to clarify this matter. While the Eighth Route Army is a regular army, its North China campaign is essentially guerrilla in nature, for it operates in enemy's rear. On occasion, however, Eighth Route Army commanders have concentrated powerful forces to strike an enemy in motion and the characteristics of orthodox mobile warfare were evident in the battle at P'ing Hsing Kuan and in other engagements.

On the other hand, after the fall of Feng Ling Tu, the operations of Central Shansi, and Suiyuan, troops were more guerrilla than orthodox in nature. In this connection the precise character of Generalissimo Chiang's instructions to the effect that independent brigades would carry out guerrilla operations should be recalled. In spite of such temporary activities these orthodox units retained their identity and after the fall of Feng Line Tu, they were not only able to fight along orthodox lines but often found it necessary to do so. This is an example of the fact that orthodox armies may, due to changes in the situation, temporarily function as guerrillas.

Likewise, guerrilla units formed from the people may gradually develop into regular units and, when operating as such, employ the tactics of orthodox mobile war. While these units function as guerrillas, they may be compared to innumerable gnats, which, by biting a giant both in front and in rear, ultimately exhaust him. They make themselves as unendurable as a group of cruel and hateful devils, and as they grow and attain gigantic proportions, they will find that their victim is not only exhausted but practically perishing. It is for this very reason that our guerrilla activities are a source of constant mental worry to Imperial Japan.

While it is improper to confuse orthodox with guerrilla operations, it is equally improper to consider that there is a chasm between the two. While differences do exist, similarities appear under certain conditions and this fact must be appreciated if we wish to establish clearly the relationship between the two. If we consider both types of warfare as a single subject, or if we confuse guerrilla warfare with the mobile operations of orthodox war, we fall into this error : We exaggerate the function of guerrillas and minimize that of the regular armies. If we agree with Chang Tso Hua, who says - 'Guerrilla warfare is the primary war strategy of a people seeking to emancipate itself,' or with Kao Kang, who believes that 'Guerrilla strategy is the only strategy possible for oppressed people', we are exaggerating the importance of guerrilla hostilities. What these zealous friends I have just quoted do not realize is this: If we do not fit guerrilla operations into their proper niche, we cannot promote them realistically. Then, not only would those who oppose take advantage of our varying opinions to turn them to the own uses to undermine us, but guerrillas would

be led assume responsibilities they could not successfully discharge and that should properly be carried out by orthodox force. In the meantime, the important guerrilla function of co-ordinating activities with the regular forces would be neglected.

Furthermore, if the theory that guerrilla warfare is our only strategy were actually applied, the regular forces would be weakened, we would be divided in purpose, and guerrilla hostilities would decline. If we say, 'Let us transform the regular forces into guerrillas', and do not place our first reliance on a victory to be gained by the regular armies over the enemy, we may certainly expect to see as a result the failure of the anti-Japanese war of resistance. The concept that guerrilla warfare is an end in itself and that guerrilla activities can be divorced from those of the regular forces is incorrect. If we assume that guerrilla warfare does not progress from beginning to end beyond its elementary forms, we have failed to recognize the fact that guerrilla hostilities can, under specific conditions, develop and assume orthodox characteristics. An opinion that admits the existence of guerrilla war, but isolates it, is one that does not properly estimate the potentialities of such war.

Equally dangerous is the concept that condemns guerrilla war on the ground that war has no other aspects than the purely orthodox. This opinion is often expressed by those who have seen the corrupt phenomena of some guerrilla regimes, observed their lack of discipline, and have seen them used as a screen behind which certain persons have indulged in bribery and other corrupt practices. These people will not admit the fundamental necessity for guerrilla bands that spring from the armed people. They say, 'Only the regular forces are capable of conducting guerrilla operations.' This theory is a mistaken one and would lead to the abolition of the people's guerrilla war.

A proper conception of the relationship that exists between guerrilla effort and that of the regular forces is essential. We believe it can be stated this way: 'Guerrilla operations during the anti-Japanese war may for certain time and temporarily become its paramount feature, particularly insofar as the enemy's rear is concerned. However, if we view the war as a whole, there can be no doubt that our regular forces are of primary importance, because it is they who are alone capable of producing the decision. Guerrilla warfare assists them in producing this favourable decision.

Orthodox forces may under certain conditions operate as guerrillas, and the latter may, under certain conditions, develop to the status of the former. However, both guerrilla forces and regular forces have their own respective development and their proper combinations.'

To clarify the relationship between the mobile aspect of orthodox war and guerrilla war, we may say that general agreement exists that the principal element of our strategy must be mobility. With the war of movement, we may at times combine the war of position. Both of these are assisted by general guerrilla hostilities. It is true that on the battlefield mobile war often becomes positional; it is true that this situation may be reversed; it is equally true that each form may combine with the other. The possibility of such combination will become more evident after the prevailing standards of equipment have been raised. For example, in a general strategical counter-attack to recapture key cities and lines of communication, it would be normal to use both mobile and positional methods. However, the point must again be made that our fundamental strategical form must be the war of movement. If we deny this, we cannot arrive at the victorious solution of the war. In sum, while we must promote guerrilla warfare as a necessary strategical auxiliary to orthodox operations, we must neither assign it the primary position in our war strategy nor substitute it for mobile and positional warfare as conducted by orthodox forces.

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Mao Tse-tung On Guerrilla Warfare

3. Guerrilla Warfare In History

Guerrilla warfare is neither a product of China nor peculiar to the present day. From the earliest historical days, it has been a feature of wars fought by every class of men against invaders and oppressors. Under suitable conditions, it has great possibilities. The many guerrilla wars in history have their points of difference, their peculiar characteristics, their varying processes and conclusions, and we must respect and profit by the experience of those whose blood was shed in them. What a pity it is that the priceless experience gained during the several hundred wars waged by the peasants of China cannot be marshaled today to guide us. Our only experience in guerrilla hostilities has been that gained from the several conflicts that have been carried on against us by foreign imperialists. But that experience should help the fighting Chinese recognize the necessity for guerrilla warfare and should confirm them in confidence of ultimate victory.

In September 1812, Napoleon, in the course of swallowing all of Europe, invaded Russia at the head of a great army totaling several hundred thousand infantry, cavalry, and artillery. At that time, Russia was weak and her ill-prepared army was not concentrated. The most important phase of her strategy was the use made of Cossack cavalry and detachments of peasants to carry on guerrilla operations. After giving up Moscow, the Russians formed nine guerrilla divisions of about five hundred men each. These, and vast groups of organized peasants, carried on partisan warfare and continually harassed the French Army. When the French Army was withdrawing, cold and starving, Russian guerrillas blocked the way and, in combination with regular troops, carried out counterattacks on the French rear, pursuing and defeating them. The army of the heroic Napoleon was almost entirely annihilated, and the guerrillas captured many officers, men, cannon, and rifles. Though the victory was

the result of various factors and depended largely on the activities of the regular army the function of the partisan groups was extremely important. The corrupt and poorly organized country that was Russia defeated and destroyed an army led by the most famous soldier of Europe and won the war in spite of the fact that her ability to organize guerrilla regimes was not fully developed. At times, guerrilla groups were hindered in their operations and the supply of equipment and arms was insufficient. If we use the Russian saying, it was a case of a battle between "the fist and the axe" [*Ivanov*].

From 1918 to 1920, the Russian Soviets, because of the opposition and intervention of foreign imperialists and the internal disturbances of White Russian groups, were forced to organize themselves in occupied territories and fight a real war. In Siberia and Alashan, in the rear of the army of the traitor Denikin and in the rear of the Poles, there were many Red Russian guerrillas. These not only disrupted and destroyed the communications in the enemy's rear but also frequently prevented his advance. On one occasion, the guerrillas completely destroyed a retreating White Army that had previously been defeated by regular Red forces. Kolchak, Denikin, the Japanese, and the Poles, owing to the necessity of staving off the attacks of guerrillas, were forced to withdraw regular troops from the front. 'Thus not only was the enemy's manpower impoverished but he found himself unable to cope with the ever-moving guerrilla' [*The Nature of Guerrilla Action*].

The development of guerrillas at that time had only reached the stage where there were detached groups of several thousands in strength, old, middle-aged, and young. The old men organized themselves into propaganda groups known as 'silver-haired units'; there was a suitable guerrilla activity for the middle-aged; the young men formed combat units, and there were even groups for the children. Among the leaders were determined Communists who carried on general political work among the people. These, although they opposed the doctrine of extreme guerrilla warfare, were quick to oppose those who condemned it. Experience tells us that 'Orthodox armies are the fundamental and principal power, guerrilla units are secondary to them and assist in the accomplishment of the mission assigned the regular forces' [*Gusev, Lessons of Civil War*]. Many of the guerrilla regimes in Russia gradually developed

until in battle they were able to discharge functions of organized regulars. The army of the famous General Galen was entirely derived from guerrillas.

During seven months in 1935 and 1936, the Abyssinians lost their war against Italy. The cause of defeat — aside from the most important political reasons that there were dissentient political groups, no strong government party, and unstable policy—was the failure to adopt a positive policy of mobile warfare. There was never a combination of the war of movement with large-scale guerrilla operations.

Ultimately, the Abyssinians adopted a purely passive defence, with the result that they were unable to defeat the Italians. In addition to this, the fact that Abyssinia is a relatively small and sparsely populated country was contributory. Even in spite of the fact that the Abyssinian Army and its equipment were not modern, she was able to withstand a mechanized Italian force of 400,000 for seven months. During that period, there were several occasions when a war of movement was combined with large-scale guerrilla operations to strike the Italians heavy blows. Moreover, several cities were retaken and casualties totaling 140,000 were inflicted. Had this policy been steadfastly continued, it would have been difficult to have named the ultimate winner. At the present time, guerrilla activities continue in Abyssinia, and if the internal political questions can be solved, an extension of such activities is probable.

In 1841 and 1842, when brave people from San Yuan Li fought the English; again from 1850 to 1864, during the Taiping War, and for a third time in 1899 in the Boxer Uprising, guerrilla tactics were employed to a remarkable degree. Particularly was this so during the Taiping War, when guerrilla operations were most extensive and the Ch'ing troops were often completely exhausted and forced to flee for their lives.

In these wars, there were no guiding principles of guerrilla action. Perhaps these guerrilla hostilities were not carried out in conjunction with regular operations, or perhaps there was a lack of co-ordination. But the fact that victory was not gained was not because of any lack in guerrilla activity but rather because of the interference of politics in military affairs. Experience shows that if precedence is not given to the question of conquering the enemy in both political and military affairs, and if regular

hostilities are not conducted with tenacity, guerrilla operations alone cannot produce final victory.

From 1927 to 1936, the Chinese Red Army fought almost continually and employed guerrilla tactics contently. At the very beginning, a positive policy was adopted. Many bases were established, and from guerrilla bands, the Reds were able to develop into regular armies. As these armies fought, new guerrilla regimes were developed over a wide area. These regimes co-ordinated their efforts with those of the regular forces. This policy accounted for the many victories gained by the guerrilla troops relatively few in number, who were armed with weapons inferior to those of their opponents. The leaders of that period properly combined guerrilla operations with a war of movement both strategically and tactically. They depended primarily upon alertness. They stressed the correct basis for both political affairs and military operations. They developed their guerrilla bands into trained units. They then determined upon a ten year period of resistance during which time they overcame innumerable difficulties and have only lately reached their goal of direct participation in the anti-Japanese war. There is no doubt that the internal unification of China is now a permanent and definite fact, and that the experience gained during our internal struggles has proved to be both necessary and advantageous to us in the struggle against Japanese imperialism. There are many valuable lessons we can learn from the experience of those years. Principle among them is the fact that guerrilla success largely depend upon powerful political leaders who work unceasingly to bring about internal unification. Such leaders must work with the people; they must have a correct conception of the policy to be adopted as regards both the people and the enemy.

After 18 September 1931, strong anti-Japanese guerrilla campaigns were opened in each of the three north-east provinces. Guerrilla activity persists there in spite of the cruelties and deceits practiced by the Japanese at the expense of the people, and in spite of the fact that her armies have occupied the land and oppressed the people for the last seven years. The struggle can be divided into two periods . During the first, which extended from 18 September 1931 to January 1933, anti-Japanese guerrilla activity exploded constantly in all three provinces. Ma Chan Shan and Su Ping Wei established an anti-Japanese regime in Heilungkiang. In Chi Lin. the National

Salvation Army and the Self-Defence Army were led by Wang Te Lin and Li Tu respectively. In Feng T'ien, Chu Lu and others commanded guerrilla units. The influence of these forces was great. They harassed the Japanese unceasingly, but because there was an indefinite political goal, improper leadership, failure to coordinate military command and operations and to work with the people, and, finally, failure to delegate proper political functions to the army, the whole organization was feeble, and its strength was not unified. As a direct result of these conditions, the campaigns failed and the troops were finally defeated by our enemy.

During the second period, which has extended from January 1933 to the present time, the situation has greatly improved. This has come about because great numbers of people who have been oppressed by the enemy have decided to resist him, because of the participation of the Chinese Communists in the anti-Japanese war and because of the fine work of the volunteer units. The guerrillas have finally educated the people to the meaning of guerrilla warfare, and in the north-east, it has again become an important and powerful influence. Already seven or eight guerrilla regiments and a number of independent platoons have been formed, and their activities make it necessary for the Japanese to send troops after them month after month. These units hamper the Japanese and undermine their control in the north-east, while, at the same time they inspire a Nationalist revolution in Korea. Such activities are not merely of transient and local importance but directly contribute to our ultimate victory.

However, there are still some weak points. For instance: National defence policy has not been sufficiently developed; participation of the people is not general; internal political organization is still in its primary stages, and the force used to attack the Japanese and the puppet governments is not yet sufficient. But if present policy is continued tenaciously, all these weaknesses will be overcome. Experience proves that guerrilla war will develop to even greater proportions and that, in spite of the cruelty of the Japanese and the many methods they have devised to cheat the people, they cannot extinguish guerrilla activities in the three north-eastern provinces.

The guerrilla experiences of China and of other countries that have been outlined;

prove that in a war of revolutionary nature such hostilities are possible, natural and necessary. They prove that if the present anti-Japanese war for the emancipation of the masses of the Chinese people is to gain ultimate victory, such hostilities must expand tremendously.

Historical experience is written in iron and blood. We must point out that the guerrilla campaigns being waged in China today are a page in history that has no precedent. Their influence will not be confined solely to China in her present anti-Japanese war but will be world-wide.

Chapter 4: [Can Victory Be Attained By Guerrilla Operations?](#)

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Mao Tse-tung On Guerrilla Warfare

4. Can Victory Be Attained By Guerrilla Operations?

Guerrilla hostilities are but one phase of the war of resistance against Japan and the answer to the question of whether or not they can produce ultimate victory can be given only after investigation and comparison of all elements of our own strength with those of the enemy. The particulars of such a comparison are several. First, the strong Japanese bandit nation is an absolute monarchy. During the course of her invasion of China, she had made comparative progress in the techniques of industrial production and in the development of excellence and skill in her army, navy, and airforce. But in spite of this industrial progress, she remains an absolute monarchy of inferior physical endowments. Her manpower, her raw materials, and her financial resources are all inadequate and insufficient to maintain her in protracted warfare or to meet the situation presented by a war prosecuted over a vast area. Added to this is the anti-war feeling now manifested by the Japanese people, a feeling that is shared by the junior officers and, more extensively, by the soldiers of the invading army. Furthermore, China is not Japan's only enemy. Japan is unable to employ her entire strength in the attack on China; she cannot, at most, spare more than a million men for this purpose, as she must hold any in excess of that number for use against other possible opponents. Because of these important primary considerations, the invading Japanese bandits can hope neither to be victorious in a protracted struggle nor to conquer a vast area. Their strategy must be one of lightning war and speedy decision. If we can hold out for three or more years, it will be most difficult for Japan to bear up under the strain.

In the war, the Japanese brigands must depend upon lines of communication linking the principal cities as routes for the transport of war materials. The most important

considerations for her are that her rear be stable and peaceful and that her lines of communication be intact. It is not to her an advantage to wage war over a vast area with disrupted lines of communication. She cannot disperse her strength and fight in a number of places, and her greatest fears are these eruptions in her rear and disruption of her lines of communication. If she can maintain communications, she will be able at will to concentrate powerful forces speedily at strategic points to engage our organized units in decisive battle. Another important Japanese objective is to profit from the industries, finances, and manpower in captured areas and with them to augment her own insufficient strength. Certainly, it is not to her advantage to forgo these benefits, not to be forced to dissipate her energies in a type of warfare in which the gains will not compensate for the losses. It is for these reasons that guerrilla warfare conducted in each bit of conquered territory over a wide area will be a heavy blow struck at the Japanese bandits. Experience in the five northern provinces as well as in Kiangsu, Chekiang and Anhwei has absolutely established the truth of this assertion.

China is a country half colonial and half feudal; it is a country that is politically, militarily, and economically backward. This is an inescapable conclusion. It is a vast country with great resources and tremendous population, a country in which the terrain is complicated and the facilities for communication are poor. All these factors favour a protracted war, they all favour the application of mobile warfare and guerilla operations. The establishment of innumerable anti-Japanese bases behind the enemy's lines will force him to fight unceasingly in many places at once, both to his front and his rear. He thus endlessly expends his resources.

We must unite the strength of the army with that of the people, we must strike the weak spots in the enemy's flanks, in his front, in his rear. We must make war everywhere and cause dispersal of his forces and dissipation of his strength. Thus the time will come when a gradual change will become evident in the relative position of ourselves and our enemy, and when that day comes, it will be the beginning of our ultimate victory over the Japanese.

Although China's population is great, it is unorganized. This is a weakness which

must be then into account.

The Japanese bandits have merely to conquer territory but rapacious, and murderous policy of the extinction of the Chinese race. We must unite the nation without regard to parties and follow our policy of resistance to the end. China today is not the China of old. It is not like Abyssinia. China today is at the point of her greatest historical progress. The standards of literacy among the masses have been raised; the *rapprochement* of Communists and Nationalists has laid the foundation for an anti-Japanese war front that is constantly being strengthened and expanded; government, army and people are all working with great energy; the raw material resources and the economic strength of the nation are waiting to be used; the unorganized people are becoming an organized nation.

These energies must be directed toward the goal of protracted war so that should the Japanese occupy much of our territory or even most of it, we shall still gain final victory. Not only must those behind our lines organize for resistance but also those who live in Japanese-occupied territory in every part of the country. The traitors who accept the Japanese as fathers are few in number, and those who have taken oath that they would prefer death to abject slavery are many. If we resist with this spirit, what enemy can we not conquer and who can say that ultimate victory will not be ours?

The Japanese are waging a barbaric war along uncivilized lines. For that reason, Japanese of all classes oppose the policies of their government, as do vast international groups. On the other hand, because China's cause is righteous, our countrymen of all classes and parties are united to oppose the invader; we have sympathy in many foreign countries including even Japan itself. This is perhaps the most important reason why Japan will lose and China will win.

The progress of the war for the emancipation of the Chinese people will be in accord with these facts. The guerrilla war of resistance will be in accord with these facts, and that guerrilla operations correlated with those of our regular forces will produce victory is the conviction of the many patriots who devote their entire strength to guerrilla hostilities.

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5. Organization For Guerilla Warfare

Four points must be considered under this subject. These are:

How are guerrilla bands formed?

How are guerrilla bands organized?

What are the methods of arming guerrilla bands?

What elements constitute a guerrilla band?

These are all questions pertaining to the organization armed guerrilla units; they are questions which those who had no experience in guerilla hostilities do not understand and on which they can arrive at no sound decisions; indeed, they would not know in what manner to begin.

How Guerrilla Units Are Originally Formed

The unit may originate in any one of the following ways:

- a) From the masses of the people.
- b) From regular army units temporarily detailed for the purpose.
- c) From regular army units permanently detailed.
- d) From the combination of a regular army unit and a unit recruited from the people.
- e) From the local militia.
- f) From deserters from the ranks of the enemy.
- g) From former bandits and bandit groups.

In the present hostilities, no doubt, all these sources will be employed.

In the first case above, the guerrilla unit is formed from the people. This is the fundamental type. Upon the arrival of the enemy army to oppress and slaughter the people, their leaders call upon them to resist. They assemble the most valorous elements, arm them with old rifles or whatever firearms they can, and thus a guerrilla unit begins. Orders have already been issued throughout the nation that call upon the people to form guerrilla units both for local defense and for other combat. If the local governments approve and aid such movements, they cannot fail to prosper. In some places, where the local government is not determined or where its officers have all fled, the leaders among the masses (relying on the sympathy of the people and their sincere desire to resist Japan and succor the country) call upon the people to resist, and they respond. Thus, many guerrilla units are organized. In circumstances of this kind, the duties of leadership usually fall upon the shoulders of young students, teachers, professors, other educators, local soldiery, professional men, artisans, and those without a fixed profession, who are willing to exert themselves to the last drop of their blood. Recently, in Shansi, Hopeh, Chahar, Suiyuan, Shantung, Chekiang, Anhwei, Kiangsu, and other provinces, extensive guerrilla hostilities have broken out. All these are organized and led by patriots. The amount of such activity is the best proof of the foregoing statement. The more such bands there are, the better will the situation be. Each district, each county, should be able to organize a great number of guerrilla squads, which, when assembled, form a guerrilla company.

There are those who say: 'I am a farmer', or, 'I am a student'; 'I can discuss literature but not military arts.' This is incorrect. There is no profound difference between the farmer and the soldier. You must have courage. You simply leave your farms and become soldiers. That you are farmers is of no difference, and if you have education, that is so much the better. When you take your arms in hand, you become soldiers; when you are organized, you become military units.

Guerrilla hostilities are the university of war, and after you have fought several times valiantly and aggressively, you may become a leader of troops and there will be many well-known regular soldiers who will not be your peers. Without question, the

fountainhead of guerrilla warfare is in the masses of the people, who organize guerrilla units directly from themselves.

The second type of guerrilla unit is that which is organized from small units of the regular forces temporarily detached for the purpose. For example, since hostilities commenced, many groups have been temporarily detached from armies, divisions, and brigades and have been assigned guerrilla duties. A regiment of the regular army may, if circumstances warrant, be dispersed into groups for the purpose of carrying on guerrilla operations. As an example of this, there is the Eighth Route Army, in North China. Excluding the periods when it carries on mobile operations as an army, it is divided into its elements and these carry on guerrilla hostilities. This type of guerrilla unit is essential for two reasons. First, in mobile-warfare situations, the coordination of guerrilla activities with regular operations is necessary. Second, until guerrilla hostilities can be developed on a grand scale, there is no one to carry out guerrilla missions but regulars. Historical experience shows us that regular army units are not able to undergo the hardships of guerrilla campaigning over long periods. The leaders of regular units engaged in guerrilla operations must be extremely adaptable. They must study the methods of guerrilla war. They must understand that initiative, discipline, and the employment of stratagems are all of the utmost importance. As the guerrilla status of regular units is but temporary, their leaders must lend all possible support to the organization of guerrilla units from among the people. These units must be so disciplined that they hold together after the departure of the regulars.

The third type of unit consists of a detachment of regulars who are permanently assigned guerrilla duties. This type of small detachment does not have to be prepared to rejoin the regular forces. Its post is somewhere in the rear of the enemy, and there it becomes the backbone of guerrilla organization. As an example of this type of organization we may take the Wu Tat Shan district in the heart of the Hopeh-Chahar-Shansi area. Along the borders of these provinces, units from the Eighth Route Army have established a framework of guerrilla operations. Around these small cores, many detachments have been organized and the area of guerrilla activity greatly expanded. In areas in which there is a possibility of cutting the enemy's lines of supply, this system should be used. Severing enemy supply routes destroys his lifeline; this is one

feature that cannot be neglected. If, at the time the regular forces withdraw from a certain area, some units left behind, these should conduct guerrilla operations in the enemy's rear. As an example of this, we have the guerrilla bands now continuing their independent operations in the Shanghai- Woosung area in spite of the withdrawal of regular forces.

The fourth type of organization is the result of a merger between small regular detachments and local guerrilla units. The regular forces may dispatch a squad, a platoon, or a company, which is placed at the disposal of the local guerrilla commander. If a small group experienced in military and political affairs is sent, it becomes the core of the local guerrilla unit. These several methods are all excellent, and if properly applied, the intensity of guerilla warfare can be extended. In the Wu Tat Shan area, each of these methods has been used.

The fifth type mentioned above is from the local militia, from police and home guards. In every North China province, there are now many of these groups, and they should be formed in every locality. The government has issued mandate to the effect that the people are not to depart from war areas. The officer in command of the county, the commander of the peace-preservation unit, the chief of police are all required to obey this mandate. They cannot retreat with their forces but must remain at their stations and resist.

The sixth type of unit is that organized from troops that come over from the enemy—the Chinese 'traitor' troops employed by the Japanese. It is always possible to produce disaffection in their ranks, and we must increase our propaganda efforts and foment mutinies among such troops. Immediately after mutinying, they must be received into our ranks and organized. The concord of the leaders and the assent of the men must be gained, and the units rebuilt politically and reorganized militarily. Once this has been accomplished, they become successful guerrilla units. In regard to this type of unit, it may be said that political work among them is of utmost importance.

The seventh type of guerrilla organization is that formed from bands of bandits and

brigands. This, although difficult, must be carried out with utmost vigour lest the enemy use such bands to his own advantages. Many bandit groups pose as anti-Japanese guerrillas, and it is only necessary to correct their political beliefs to convert them.

In spite of inescapable differences in the fundamental types of guerrilla bands, it is possible to unite them to form a vast sea of guerrillas. The ancients said, 'Tai Shan is a great mountain because it does not scorn the merest handful of dirt; the rivers and seas are deep because they absorb the waters of small streams.' Attention paid to the enlistment and organization of guerrillas of every type and from every source will increase the potentialities of guerrilla action in the anti-Japanese war. This is something that patriots will not neglect.

THE METHOD OF ORGANIZING GUERRILLA REGIMES

Many of those who decide to participate in guerrilla activities do not know the methods of organization. For such people, as well as for students who have no knowledge of military affairs, the matter of organization is a problem that requires solution. Even among those who have military knowledge, there are some who know nothing of guerrilla regimes use they are lacking in that particular type of experience. The subject of the organization of such regimes is not confined to the organization of specific units but includes all guerrilla activities within the area where the regime functions.

As an example of such organization, we may take a geographical area in the enemy's rear. This area may comprise many counties. It must be sub-divided and individual companies or battalions formed to accord with the sub-divisions. To this 'military area', a military commander and political commissioners are appointed. Under these, the necessary officers both military and political, are appointed. In the military headquarters, there will be the staff, the aides, the supply officers, and the medical personnel. These are controlled by the chief of staff, who acts in accordance with orders from the commander. In the political headquarters, there are bureaus of propaganda organization, people's mass movements, and miscellaneous affairs.

Control of these is vested in the political chairman.

The military areas are sub-divided into smaller districts in accordance with local geography, the enemy situation locally, and the state of guerrilla development. Each of these smaller divisions within the area is a district, each of which may consist of from two to six counties. To each district, a military commander and several political commissioners are appointed. Under their direction, military and political headquarters are organized. Tasks are assigned in accordance with the number of guerrilla troops available. Although the names of the officers in the 'district' correspond to those in the larger 'area', the number of the functionaries assigned in the former case should be reduced to the least possible. In order to unify control, to handle guerrilla troops that come from different sources, and to harmonize military operations and local political affairs, a committee of from seven to nine members should be organized in each area and district. This committee, the members of which are selected by the troops and the local political officers, should function as a forum for the discussion of both military and political matters.

All the people in an area should arm themselves and be organized into two groups. One of these groups is a combat group, the other a self-defence unit with but limited military quality. Regular combatant guerrillas are organized into one of three general types of units. The first of these is the small unit, the platoon or company. In each county, three to six units may be organized. The second type is the battalion of from two to four companies. One such unit should be organized in each county. While the unit fundamentally belongs to the county in it was organized, it may operate in other counties. While in areas other than its own, it must operate in conjunction with local units in order to take advantage of their manpower, their knowledge of local terrain and local customs, and their information of the enemy.

The third type is the guerrilla regiment, which consists of from two to four of the above-mentioned battalion units. If sufficient manpower is available, a guerrilla a brigade of from two to four regiments may be formed.

Each of the units has its own peculiarities of organization. A squad, the smallest unit,

has a strength of from nine to eleven men, including the leader and the assistant leader. Its arms may be from two to five Western-style rifles, with the remaining men armed with rifles of local manufacture, fowling-pieces, etc., spears, or big swords. Two to four such squads form a platoon. This too has a leader and an assistant leader, and when acting independently, it is assigned a political officer to carry on political propaganda work. The platoon may have about ten rifles, with the remainder of its four of such units from a company, which, like the platoon, has a leader, an assistant leader, and a political officer. All these units are under the direct supervision of the military commanders of the areas in which they operate.

The battalion unit must be more thoroughly organized and better equipped than the smaller units. Its discipline and its personnel should be superior. If a battalion is formed from company units, it should not deprive subordinate units entirely of their manpower and their arms. If in a small area, there is a peace-preservation corps, a branch of the militia, or police, regular guerrilla units should not be dispersed over it.

The guerrilla unit next in size to the battalion is the regiment. This must be under more severe discipline than the battalion. In an independent guerrilla regiment, there may be ten men per squad, three squad per platoon, three platoons per company, three companies per battalion, and three battalions to the regiment. Two of such regiments form a brigade. Each of these units has a commander, a vice-commander, and a political officer.

In North China, guerrilla cavalry units should be established. These may be regiments of from two to four companies, or battalions.

All these units from the lowest to the highest are combatant guerrilla units and receive their supplies from the central government. Details of their organization are shown in the tables.

All the people of both sexes from the ages of sixteen to forty-five must be organized into anti-Japanese self-defence units, the basis of which is voluntary service. As a first step, they must procure arms, then they must be given both military and political

training. Their responsibilities are : local sentry duties, securing information of the enemy, arresting traitors, and preventing the dissemination of enemy propaganda. When the enemy launches a guerrilla-suppression drive, these units, armed with what weapons there are, are assigned to certain areas to deceive, hinder, and harass him. Thus, the defence units assist the combatant guerrillas. They have other functions. They furnish stretcher-bearers to transport the wounded , carriers to take food to the troops, and comfort missions to provide the troops with tea and rice. If a locality can organize such a self-defence unit as we have described, the traitors cannot hide nor can bandits and robbers disturb the peace of the people. Thus the people will continue to assist the guerrilla and supply manpower to our regular armies. 'The organization of self-defence units is a transitional step in the development of universal conscription. Such units are reservoirs of manpower for the orthodox forces.'

There have been such organizations for some time in Shansi, Shensi, Honan, and Suiyuan. The youth organizations in different provinces were formed for the purpose of educating the young. They have been of some help. However, they were not voluntary, and confidence of the people was thus not gained. These organizations were not widespread, and their effect was almost negligible. This system was, therefore, supplanted by the new-type organizations,. Which are organized on the principles of voluntary co-operation and non-separation of the members from their native localities. When the members of these organizations are in their native towns, they support themselves . Only in case of military necessity are they ordered to remote places, and when this is done, the government must support them. Each member of these groups must have a weapon even if the weapon is only a knife, a pistol, a lance, or a spear.

In all places where the enemy operates, these self-defence units should organize within themselves a small guerrilla group of perhaps from three to ten men armed with pistols or revolvers. This group is not required to leave its native locality.

The organization of these self-defence units is mentioned in this book because such units are useful for the purposes of inculcating the people with military and political knowledge, keeping order in the rear, and replenishing the ranks of the regulars.

These groups should be organized not only in the active war zones but in every province in China. 'The people must be inspired to co-operate voluntarily. We must not force them, for if we do, it will be ineffectual.' This is extremely important.

In order to control anti-Japanese military organization as a whole, it is necessary to establish a system of military areas and districts along the lines we have indicated.

EQUIPMENT OF GUERRILLAS

In regard to the problem of guerrilla equipment, it must be understood that guerrillas are lightly-armed attack groups, which require simple equipment. The standard of equipment is based upon the nature of duties assigned; the equipment of low-class guerrilla units is not as good as that of higher-class units. For example, those who are assigned the task of destroying rail communications are better equipped than those who do not have that task. The equipment of guerrillas cannot be based on what the guerrillas want, to even what they need, but must be based on what is available for their use. Equipment cannot be furnished immediately but must be acquired gradually. These are points to be kept in mind .

The question of equipment includes the collection, supply, distribution, and replacement of weapons, ammunition, blankets, communication materials, transport, and facilities for propaganda work. The supply of weapons and ammunition is most difficult, particularly at the time the unit is established, but this problem can always be solved eventually. Guerrilla bands that originate in the people are furnished with revolvers, pistols, rifles, spears, big swords, and land mines and mortars of local manufacture. Other elementary weapons are added and as many new-type rifles as are available are distributed. After a period of resistance, it is possible to increase the supply of equipment by capturing it from the enemy. In this respect, the transport companies are the easiest to equip, for in any successful attack, we will capture the enemy's transport.

An armory should be established in each guerrilla district for the manufacture and repair of rifles and for the production of cartridge, hand grenades and bayonets.

Guerrillas must not depend to much on an armory. The enemy is the principal source of their supply.

For destruction of railway tracks, bridges, and stations in enemy-controlled territory, it is necessary to gather together demolition materials. Troops must be trained in the preparation and use of demolitions, and a demolition unit must be organized in each regiment.

As for minimum clothing requirements, these are that each man shall have at least two summer-weight uniforms, one suit of winter clothing, two hats, a pair of wrap puttees, and blanket. Each man must have a pack or a bag for food. In the north, each man must have an overcoat. In acquiring this clothing, we cannot depend on captures made by the enemy, for it is forbidden for captors to take clothing from their prisoners. In order to maintain high morale in guerrilla forces, all the clothing and equipment mentioned should be furnished by the representatives of the government in each guerrilla district. These men may confiscate clothing from traitors or ask contributions from those best able to afford them. In subordinate groups, uniforms are unnecessary.

Telephone and radio equipment is not necessary in lower groups, but all units from regiment up are equipped with both. This material can be obtained by contributions from the regular forces and by capture from the enemy.

In the guerrilla army in general, and at bases in particular, there must be a high standard of medical equipment. Besides the services of the doctors, medicines must be procured. Although guerrillas can depend on the enemy for some portion of their medical supplies, they must, in general, depend upon contributions. If Western medicines are not available, local medicines must be made to suffice.

The problem of transport is more vital in North-China than in the south, for in the south all that are necessary are mules and horses. Small guerrilla units need no animals, but regiments and brigades will find them necessary. Commanders and staffs of units from companies up should be furnished a riding animal each. At times, two

officers will have to share a horse. Officers whose duties are of minor nature do not have to be mounted.

Propaganda materials are very important. Every large guerrilla unit should have a printing press and a mimeograph stone. They must also have paper on which to print propaganda leaflets and notices. They must be supplied with large brushes. In guerrilla areas, there should be a printing press or a lead-type press.

For the purpose of printing training instructions, this material is of the greatest importance.

In addition to the equipment listed above, it is necessary to have field-glasses, compasses, and military maps. An accomplished guerrilla group will acquire these things.

Because of the proved importance of guerrilla hostilities in the anti-Japanese war, the headquarters of the Nationalist Government and the commanding officers of the various war zones should do their best to supply the guerrillas with what they actually need and are unable to get for themselves. However, it must be repeated that guerrilla equipment will in the main depend on the efforts of the guerrillas themselves. If they depend on higher officers too much, the psychological effect will be to weaken the guerrilla spirit of resistance.

ELEMENTS OF THE GUERRILLA ARMY

The term 'element' as used in the title to this section refers to the personnel, both officers and men, of the guerrilla army. Since each guerrilla group fights in a protracted war, its officers must be brave and positive men whose entire loyalty is dedicated to the cause of emancipation of the people. An officer should have the following qualities: great powers of endurance so that in spite of any hardship he sets an example to his men and be a model for them; he must be able to mix easily with the people; his spirit and that of the men must be one in strengthening the policy of resistance to the Japanese. If he wishes to gain victories, he must study tactics. A

guerrilla group with officers of this calibre would be unbeatable. I do not mean that every guerrilla group can have, at its inception, officers of such qualities. The officers must be men naturally endowed with good qualities which can be developed during the course of campaigning. The most important natural quality is that of complete loyalty to the idea of people's emancipation. If this is present, the others will develop; if it is not present, nothing can be done. When officers are first selected from a group, it is this quality that should receive particular attention. The officers in a group should be inhabitants of the locality in which the group is organized, as this will facilitate relations between them and the local civilians. In addition, officers so chosen would be familiar with conditions. If in any locality there are not enough men of sufficiently high qualifications to become officers, an effort must be made to train and educate the people so these qualities may be developed and the potential officer material increased. There can be no disagreements between officers native to one place and those from other localities.

A guerrilla group ought to operate on the principle that only volunteers are acceptable for service. It is a mistake to impress people into service. As long as a person is willing to fight, his social condition or position is no consideration, but only men who are courageous and determined can bear the hardships of guerrilla campaigning in a protracted war.

A soldier who habitually breaks regulations must be dismissed from the army. Vagabonds and vicious people must not be accepted for service. The opium habit must be forbidden, and a soldier who cannot break himself of the habit should be dismissed. Victory in guerrilla war is conditioned upon keeping the membership pure and clean.

It is a fact that during the war the enemy may take advantage of certain people who are lacking in conscience and patriotism and induce them to join the guerrillas for the purpose of betraying them. Officers must, therefore, continually educate the soldiers and inculcate patriotism in them. This will prevent the success of traitors. The traitors who are in the ranks must be discovered and expelled, and punishment and expulsion meted out to those who have been influenced by them. In all such cases, the officers

should summon the soldiers and relate the facts to them, thus arousing their hatred and detestation for traitors. This procedure will serve as well as a warning to the other soldiers. If an officer is discovered to be a traitor, some prudence must be used in the punishment adjudged. However, the work of eliminating traitors in the army begins with their elimination from among the people.

Chinese soldiers who have served under puppet governments and bandits who have been converted should be welcomed as individuals or as groups. They should be well-treated and repatriated. But care should be used during their reorientation to distinguish those whose idea is to fight the Japanese from those who may be present for other reasons.

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Mao Tse-tung On Guerrilla Warfare

6. The Political Problems Of Guerrilla Warfare

In Chapter 1, I mentioned the fact that guerrilla troops should have a precise conception of the political goal of the struggle and the political organization to be used in attaining that goal. This means that both organization and discipline of guerrilla troops must be at a high level so that they can carry out the political activities that are the life of both the guerrilla armies and of revolutionary warfare.

First of all, political activities depend upon the indoctrination of both military and political leaders with the idea of anti-Japanism. Through them, the idea is transmitted to the troops. One must not feel that he is anti-Japanese merely because he is a member of a guerrilla unit. The anti-Japanese idea must be an ever-present conviction, and if it is forgotten, we may succumb to the temptations of the enemy or be overcome with discouragement. In a war of long duration, those whose conviction that the people must be emancipated is not deep rooted are likely to become shaken in their faith or actually revolt. Without the general education that enables everyone to understand our goal of driving out Japanese imperialism and establishing a free and happy China, the soldiers fight without conviction and lose their determination.

The political goal must be clearly and precisely indicated to inhabitants of guerrilla zones and their national consciousness awakened. Hence, a concrete explanation of the political systems used is important not only to guerrilla troops but to all those who are concerned with the realization of our political goal. The Kuomintang has issued a pamphlet entitled *System of National Organization for War*, which should be widely distributed throughout guerrilla zones. If we lack national organization, we will lack the essential unity that should exist between the soldiers and the people.

A study and comprehension of the political objectives of this war and of the anti-Japanese front is particularly important for officers of guerrilla troops. There are some militarists who say: 'We are not interested in politics but only in the profession of arms.' It is vital that these simple-minded militarists be made to realize the relationship that exists between politics and military affairs. Military action is a method used to attain a political goal. While military affairs and political affairs are not identical, it is impossible to isolate one from the other.

It is to be hoped that the world is in the last era of strife. The vast majority of human beings have already prepared or are preparing to fight a war that will bring justice to the oppressed peoples of the world. No matter how long this war may last, there is no doubt that it will be followed by an unprecedented epoch of peace. The war that we are fighting today for the freedom of all human beings, and the independent, happy, and liberal China that we are fighting to establish will be a part of that new world order. A conception like this is difficult for the simple-minded militarist to grasp and it must therefore be carefully explained to him.

There are three additional matters that must be considered under the broad question of political activities. These are political activities, first, as applied to the troops; second, as applied to the people; and, third, as applied to the enemy. The fundamental problems are: first, spiritual unification of officers and men within the army; second, spiritual unification of the army and the people; of the army and the people; and, last, destruction of the unity of the enemy. The concrete methods for achieving these unities are discussed in detail in pamphlet Number 4 of this series, entitled *Political Activities in Anti-Japanese Guerrilla Warfare*.

A revolutionary army must have discipline that is established on a limited democratic basis. In all armies, obedience to the subordinates to their superiors must be exacted. This is true in the case of guerrilla discipline, but the basis for guerrilla discipline must be the individual conscience. With guerrillas, a discipline of compulsion is ineffective. In any revolutionary army, there is unity of purpose as far as both officers and men are concerned, and, therefore, within such an army, discipline is self-imposed. Although discipline in guerrilla ranks is not as severe as in the ranks of

orthodox forces, the necessity for discipline exists. This must be self-imposed, because only when it is, is the soldier able to understand completely, why he fights and why he must obey. This type of discipline becomes a tower of strength within the army, and it is the only type that can truly harmonize the relationship that exists between officers and soldiers.

In any system where discipline is externally imposed, the relationship that exists between officer and man is characterized by indifference of the one to the other. The idea that officers can physically beat or severely tongue-lash their men is a feudal one and is not in accord with the conception of self-imposed discipline. Discipline of the feudal type will destroy internal unity and fighting strength. A discipline self-imposed is the primary characteristic of a democratic system in the army .

A secondary characteristic is found in the degree of liberties accorded officers and soldiers. In a revolutionary army, all individuals enjoy political liberty and the question, for example, of the emancipation of the people must not only be tolerated but discussed, and propaganda must encouraged. Further, in such an army, the mode of living of the officers and the soldiers must not differ too much, and this is particularly true in the case of guerilla troops. Officers should live under the same conditions as their men, for that is the only way in which they can gain from their men the admiration and confidence so vital in war. It is incorrect to hold to a theory of equality in all things. But there must be equality of existence in accepting the hardships and dangers of war, thus we may attain to the unification of the officer and soldier groups a unity both horizontal within the group itself, and vertical, that is, from lower to higher echelons. It is only when such unity is present that units can be said to be powerful combat factors.

There is also a unity of spirit that should exist between troops and local inhabitants. The Eighth Route Army put into practice a code known as 'Three Rules and the Eight Remarks', which we list here:

Rules:

All actions are subject to command.

Do not steal from the people.

Be neither selfish nor unjust.

Remarks:

Replace the door when you leave the house.

Roll up the bedding on which you have slept.

Be courteous.

Be honest in your transactions.

Return what you borrow.

Replace what you break.

Do not bathe in the presence of women.

Do not without authority search those you arrest.

The Red Army adhered to this code for ten years and the Eighth Route Army and other units have since adopted it.

Many people think it impossible for guerrillas to exist for long in the enemy's rear. Such a belief reveals lack of comprehension of the relationship that should exist between the people and the troops. The former may be likened to water the latter to the fish who inhabit it. How may it be said that these two cannot exist together? It is only undisciplined troops who make the people their enemies and who, like the fish out of its native element cannot live.

We further our mission of destroying the enemy by propagandizing his troops, by treating his captured soldiers with consideration, and by caring for those of his wounded who fall into our hands. If we fail in these respects, we strengthen the solidarity of our enemy.

Chapter 7: The Strategy Of Guerrilla Resistance Against

Japan

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Mao Tse-tung On Guerrilla Warfare

7. The Strategy Of Guerrilla Resistance Against Japan

It has been definitely decided that in the strategy of our war against Japan, guerrilla strategy must be auxiliary to fundamental orthodox methods. If this were a small country, guerrilla activities could be carried out close to the scene of operations of the regular army and directly complementary to them. In such a case, there would be no question of guerrilla strategy as such. Nor would the question arise if our country were as strong as Russia, for example, and able speedily to eject an invader. The question exists because China, a weak country of vast size, has today progressed to the point where it has become possible to adopt the policy of a protracted war characterized by guerrilla operations. Although these may at first glance seem to be abnormal or heterodox, such is not actually the case.

Because Japanese military power is inadequate, much of the territory her armies have overrun is without sufficient garrison troops. Under such circumstances the primary functions of guerrillas are three: first, to conduct a war on exterior lines, that is, in the rear of the enemy; second, to establish bases, and, last, to extend the war areas. Thus, guerrilla participation in the war is not merely a matter of purely local guerrilla tactics but involves strategical considerations.

Such war, with its vast time and space factors, establishes a new military process, the focal point of which is China today. The Japanese are apparently attempting to recall a past that saw the Yuan extinguish the Sung and the Ch'ing conquer the Ming; that witnessed the extension of the British Empire to North America and India; that saw the Latins overrun Central and South America. As far as China today is concerned, such dreams of conquest are fantastic and without reality. Today's China is better

equipped than was the China of yesterday, and a new type of guerrilla hostilities is a part of that equipment. If our enemy fails to take these facts into consideration and makes too optimistic an estimate of the situation, he courts disaster.

Though the strategy of guerrillas is inseparable from war strategy as a whole, the actual conduct of these hostilities differs from the conduct of orthodox operations. Each type of warfare has methods peculiar to itself, and methods suitable to regular warfare cannot be applied with success to the special situations that confront guerrillas.

Before we treat the practical aspects of guerrilla war, it might be well to recall the fundamental axiom of combat on which all military action is based. This can be stated: 'Conservation of one's own strength; destruction of enemy strength.' A military policy based on this axiom is consonant with a national policy directed towards the building of a free and prosperous Chinese state and the destruction of Japanese imperialism. It is in furtherance of this policy that government applies in military strength. Is the sacrifice demanded by war in conflict with the idea of self-preservation? Not at all. The sacrifices demanded are necessary both to destroy the enemy and to preserve ourselves; the sacrifice of a part of the people is necessary to preserve the whole. All the considerations of military action are derived from this axiom. Its application is as apparent in all tactical and strategical conceptions as it is in the simple case of the soldier who shoots at his enemy from a covered position.

All guerrilla units start from nothing and grow. What methods should we select to ensure the conservation and development of our own strength and the destruction of that of the enemy? The essential requirements are the six listed below:

Retention of the initiative; alertness; carefully planned tactical attacks in a war of strategical defence; tactical speed in a war strategically protracted, tactical operations on exterior lines in a war conducted strategically on interior lines.

Conduct of operations to complement those of the regular army.

The establishment of bases.

A clear understanding of the relationship that exists between the attack and the defence.

The development of mobile operations.

Correct command.

The enemy, though numerically weak, is strong in the quality of his troops and their equipment; we, on the other hand, are strong numerically but weak as to quality. These considerations have been taken into account in the development of the policy of tactical offence, tactical speed, and tactical operations on exterior lines in a war that, strategically speaking, is defensive in character, protracted in nature, and conducted along interior lines. Our strategy is based on these conceptions. They must be kept in mind in the conduct of all operations.

Although the element of surprise is not absent in orthodox warfare, there are fewer opportunities to apply it than there are during guerrilla hostilities. In the latter, speed is essential. The movements of guerrilla troops must be secret and of supernatural rapidity; the enemy must be taken unaware, and the action entered speedily. There can be no procrastination in the execution of plans; no assumption of a negative or passive defence; no great dispersion of forces in many local engagements. The basic method is the attack in a violent and deceptive form.

While there may be cases where the attack will extend over a period of several days (if that length of time is necessary to annihilate an enemy group), it is more profitable to launch and push an attack with maximum speed. The tactics of defence have no place in the realm of guerrilla warfare. If a delaying action is necessary, such places as defiles, river crossings, and villages offer the most suitable conditions, for it is in such places that the enemy's arrangements may be disrupted and he may be annihilated.

The enemy is much stronger than we are, and it is true that we can hinder, distract, disperse, and destroy him only if we disperse our own forces. Although guerrilla warfare is the warfare of such dispersed units, it is sometimes desirable to concentrate in order to destroy an enemy. Thus, the principle of concentration of force against a

relatively weaker enemy is applicable to guerrilla warfare.

We can prolong this struggle and make of it a protracted war only by gaining positive and lightning-like tactical decisions; by employing our manpower in proper concentrations and dispersions; and by operation on exterior lines in order to surround and destroy our enemy. If we cannot surround whole armies, we can at least partially destroy them, if we cannot kill the Japanese, we can capture them. The total effect of many local successes will be to change the relative strengths of the opposing forces. The destruction of Japan's military power, combined with the international sympathy for China's cause and the revolutionary tendencies evident in Japan, will be sufficient to destroy Japanese imperialism.

We will next discuss initiative, alertness, and the matter of careful planning. What is meant by initiative in warfare? In all battles and wars, a struggle to gain and retain the initiative goes on between the opposing sides, for it is the side that holds the initiative that has liberty of action. When an army loses the initiative, it loses its liberty; its role becomes passive; it faces the danger of defeat and destruction.

It is more difficult to obtain the initiative when defending on interior lines than it is while attacking on exterior lines. This is what Japan is doing. There are, however, several weak points as far as Japan is concerned. One of these is lack of sufficient manpower for the task; another is her cruelty to the inhabitants of conquered areas; a third is the underestimation of Chinese strength, which has resulted in the differences between military cliques, which, in turn, have been productive of many mistakes in the direction of her military forces. For instance, she has been gradually compelled to increase her manpower in China while, at the same time, the many arguments over plans of operations and disposition of troops have resulted in the loss of good opportunities for improvement of her strategical position. This explains the fact that although the Japanese are frequently able to surround large bodies of Chinese troops, they have never yet been able to capture more than a few. The Japanese military machine is thus being weakened by insufficiency of manpower, inadequacy of resources, the barbarism of her troops, and the general stupidity that has characterized the conduct of operations. Her offensive continues unabated, but because of the

weaknesses pointed out, her attack must be limited in extent. She can never conquer China. The day will come — indeed already has in some areas — when she will be forced into a passive role. When hostilities commenced, China was passive, but as we enter the second phase of the war we find ourselves pursuing a strategy of mobile warfare, with both guerrillas and regulars operating on exterior lines. Thus, with each passing day, we seize some degree of initiative from the Japanese.

The matter of initiative is especially serious for guerrilla forces, who must face critical situations unknown to regular troops. The superiority of the enemy and the lack of unity and experience within our own ranks may be cited. Guerrillas can, however, gain the initiative if they keep in mind the weak points of the enemy. Because of the enemy's insufficient manpower, guerrillas can operate over vast territories, because he is a foreigner and a barbarian, guerrillas can gain the confidence of millions of their countrymen; because of the stupidity of enemy commanders, guerrillas can make full use of their own cleverness. Both guerrillas and regulars must exploit these enemy weaknesses while, at the same time, our own are remedied. Some of our weaknesses are apparent only and are, in actuality, sources of strength. For example, the very fact that most guerrilla groups are small makes it desirable and advantageous for them to appear and disappear in the enemy's rear. With such activities, the enemy is simply unable to cope. A similar liberty of action can rarely be obtained by regular forces.

When the enemy attacks the guerrillas with more than one column, it is difficult for the latter to retain the initiative. Any error, no matter how slight, in the estimation of the situation is likely to result in forcing the guerrillas into a passive role. They will then find themselves unable to beat off the attacks of the enemy.

It is apparent that we can gain and retain the initiative only by a correct estimation of the situation and a proper arrangement of all military and political factors. A too pessimistic estimate will operate to force us into a passive position, with consequent loss of initiative; an overly optimistic estimate, with its rash ordering of factors, will produce the same result.

No military leader is endowed by heaven with an ability to seize the initiative. It is the intelligent leader who does so after a careful study and estimate of the situation and arrangement of the military and political factors involved. When a guerrilla unit, through either a poor estimate on the part of its leader or pressure from the enemy, is forced into a passive position, its first duty is to extricate itself. No method can be prescribed for this, as the method to be employed will, in every case, depend on the situation. One can, if necessary, run away. But there are times when the situation seems hopeless and, in reality, is not so at all. It is at such times that the good leader recognizes and seizes the moment when he can regain the lost initiative.

Let us revert to alertness. To conduct one's troops with alertness is an essential of guerrilla command. Leaders must realize that to operate alertly is the most important factor in gaining the initiative and vital in its effect of the relative situation that exists between our forces and those of the enemy. Guerrilla commanders adjust their operations to the enemy situation, to the terrain, and to prevailing local conditions. Leaders must be alert to sense changes in these factors and make necessary modifications in troop dispositions to accord with them. The leader must be like a fisherman, who, with his nets, is able both to cast them and to pull them out in awareness of the depth of the water, the strength of the current or the presence of any obstructions that may foul them. As the fisherman controls his nets through the lead ropes, so the guerrilla leader maintains contact with control over his units. As the fisherman must change his position, so must the guerrilla commander. Dispersion, concentration, constant change of position—it is in these ways that guerrillas employ their strength.

In general, guerrilla units disperse to operate:

When the enemy is in over-extended defence, and sufficient force cannot be concentrated against him, guerrillas must disperse, harass him, and demoralize him.

When encircled by the enemy, guerrillas disperse to withdraw.

When the nature of the ground limits action, guerrillas disperse.

When the availability of supplies limits action, they disperse.

Guerrillas disperse in order to promote mass movements over a wide area.

Regardless of the circumstances that prevail at the time of dispersal, caution must be exercised in certain matters:

A relatively large group should be retained as a central force. The remainder of the troops should not be divided into groups of absolutely equal size. In this way, the leader is in a position to deal with any circumstances that may arise.

Each dispersed unit should have clear and definite responsibilities. Orders should specify a place to which to proceed, the time of proceeding, and the place, time, and method of assembly.

Guerrillas concentrate when the enemy is advancing upon them, and there is opportunity to fall upon him and destroy him. Concentration may be desirable when the enemy is on the defensive and guerrillas wish to destroy isolated detachments in particular localities. By the term 'concentrate', we do not mean the assembly of all manpower but rather of only that necessary for the task. The remaining guerrillas are assigned missions of hindering and delaying the enemy, of destroying isolated groups, or of conducting mass propaganda.

In addition to the dispersion and concentration of forces, the leader must understand what is termed 'alert shifting'. When the enemy feels the danger of guerrillas, he will generally send troops out to attack them. The guerrillas must consider the situation and decide at what time and at what place they wish to fight. If they find that they cannot fight, they must immediately shift. Then the enemy may be destroyed piecemeal. For example; after a guerrilla group has destroyed an enemy detachment at one place, it may be shifted to another area to attack and destroy a second detachment. Sometimes, it will not be profitable for a unit to become engaged in a certain area, and in that case, it must move immediately.

When the situation is serious, the guerrilla must move with the fluidity of water and

the ease of the blowing wind. Their tactics must deceive, tempt, and confuse the enemy. They must lead the enemy to believe that they will attack him from the east and north, and they must then strike him from the west and the south. They must strike, then rapidly disperse. They must move at night.

Guerrilla initiative is expressed in dispersion, concentration, and the alert shifting of forces. If guerrillas are stupid and obstinate, they will be led to passive positions and severely damaged. Skill in conducting guerrilla operations, however, lies not in merely understanding the things we have discussed but rather in their actual application on the field of battle. The quick intelligence that constantly watches the ever-changing situation and is able to seize on the right moment for decisive action is found only in keen and thoughtful observers.

Careful planning is necessary if victory is to be won in guerrilla war, and those who fight without method do not understand the nature of guerrilla action. A plan is necessary regardless of the size of the unit involved; a prudent plan is as necessary in the case of the squad as in the case of the regiment. The situation must be carefully studied, then an assignment of duties made. Plans must include both political and military instruction; the matter of supply and equipment, and the matter of co-operation with local civilians. Without study of these factors, it is impossible either to seize the initiative or to operate alertly. It is true that guerrillas can make only limited plans, but even so, the factors we have mentioned must be considered.

The initiative can be secured and retained only following a positive victory that results from attack. The attack must be made on guerrilla initiative; that is, guerrillas must not permit themselves to be maneuvered into a position where they are robbed of initiative and where the decision to attack is forced upon them. Any victory will result from careful planning and alert control. Even in defence, all our efforts must be directed toward a resumption of the attack, for it is only by attack that we can extinguish our enemies and preserve ourselves. A defence or a withdrawal is entirely useless as far as extinguishing our enemies is concerned and of only temporary value, as far as the conservation of our forces is concerned. This principle is valid both for guerrillas and regular troops. The differences are of degree only; that is to say, in the

manner of execution.

The relationship that exists between guerrilla and the orthodox forces is important and must be appreciated. Generally speaking, there are types of co-operation between guerrillas and orthodox groups. These are:

Strategical co-operation.

Tactical co-operation.

Battle co-operation.

Guerrillas who harass the enemy's rear installations and hinder his transport are weakening him and encouraging the national spirit of resistance. They are co-operating strategically. For example, the guerrillas in Manchuria had no functions of strategical co-operation with orthodox forces until the war in China started. Since that time, their faction of strategical co-operation is evident, for if they can kill one enemy, make the enemy expend one round of ammunition, or hinder one enemy group in its advance southward, our powers of resistance here are proportionately increased. Such guerrilla action has a positive action on the enemy nation and on its troops, while, at the same time, it encourages our own countrymen. Another example of strategical co-operation is furnished by the guerrillas who operate along the P'ing-Sui, P'ing-Han, Chin-P'u, T'ung-Pu, and Cheng-T'ai railways. This co-operation began when the invader attacked, continued during the period when he held garrisoned cities in the areas, and was intensified when our regular forces counter-attacked, in an effort to restore the lost territories.

As an example of tactical co-operation, we may cite the operations at Hsing-K'ou, when guerrillas both north and south of Yeh Men destroyed the T'ung-P'u railway and the motor roads near P'ing Hosing Pass and Yang Fang K'ou. A number of small operating base were established, and organized guerrilla action in Shansi complemented the activities of the regular forces both there and in the defence of Honan. similarly, during the south Shantung campaign, guerrillas in the five northern provinces co-operated with the army's operation on the Hsuchow front.

Guerrilla commanders in rear areas and those in command of regiments assigned to operate with orthodox units must co-operate in accordance with the situation. It is their function to determine weak points in the enemy dispositions, harass them, to disrupt their transport, and to undermine their morale, If guerrilla action were independent, the results to be obtained from tactical co-operation would be lost and those that result from strategical co-operation greatly diminished. In order to accomplish their mission and improve the degree of co-operation, guerrilla units must be equipped with some means of rapid communication. For this purpose, two way radio sets are recommended.

Guerrilla forces in the immediate battle area are responsible for close co-operation with regular forces, Their principal functions are to hinder enemy transport to gather information, and to act as outposts and sentinels. Even without precise instructions from the commander of the regular forces, these missions, as well as any others that contribute to the general success, should be assumed.

The problem of establishment of bases is of particular importance. This is so because this war is a cruel and protracted struggle. The lost territories can be restored only by a strategical counter-attack and this we cannot carry out until the enemy is well into China. Consequently, some part of our country — or, indeed, most of it — may be captured by the enemy and become his rear area. It is our task to develop intensive guerrilla warfare over this vast area and convert the enemy's rear into an additional front. Thus the enemy will never be able to stop fighting. In order to subdue the occupied territory, the enemy will have to become increasingly severe and oppressive.

A guerrilla base may be defined as an area, strategically located, in which the guerrillas can carry out their duties of training, self-preservation and development. Ability to fight a war without a rear area is a fundamental characteristic of guerrilla action, but this does not mean that guerrilla can exist and function over a long period of time without the development of base areas. History shows us many example of peasant revolts that were unsuccessful, and it is fanciful to believe that such

movements, characterized by banditry and brigandage, could succeed in this era of improved communications and military equipment. Some guerrilla leaders seem to think that those qualities are present in today's movement, and before such leaders can comprehend the importance of base areas in the long-term war, their mind must be disabused of this idea.

The subject of bases may be better understood if we consider:

The various categories of bases.

Guerrilla areas and base areas.

The establishment of bases.

The development of bases.

Guerrilla bases may be classified according to their location as: first, mountain bases; second, plains bases; and last, river, lake, and bay bases. The advantages of bases in mountainous areas are evident. Those which are now established are at Ch'ang P'o Chan, Wu Tai Shan, Taiheng Shan, Tai Shan, Yen Shan, and Mao Shan. These bases are strongly protected. Similar bases should be established in all enemy rear areas.

Plains country is generally not satisfactory for guerrilla operating bases, but this does not mean that guerrilla warfare cannot flourish in such country or that bases cannot be established there. The extent of guerrilla development in Hopeh and west Shantung proves the opposite to be the case. Whether we can count on the use of these bases over long periods of time is questionable. We can, however, establish small bases of a seasonal or temporary nature. This we can do because our barbaric enemy simply does not have the manpower to occupy all the areas he has overrun and because the population of China is so numerous that a base can be established anywhere. Seasonal bases in plains country may be established in the winter when the rivers are frozen over, and in the summer when the crops are growing. Temporary bases may be established when the enemy is otherwise occupied. When the enemy advances, the guerrillas who have established bases in the plains area are the first to engage him. Upon their withdrawal into mountainous country, they should leave behind them

guerrilla groups dispersed over the entire area. Guerrillas shift from base to base on the theory that they must be in one place one day and another place the next.

There are many historical examples of the establishment of bases in river, bay, and lake country, and this is one aspect of our activity that has so far received little attention. Red guerrillas held out for many years in the Hungtze Lake region. We should establish bases in the Hungtze and Tai areas and along rivers and watercourses in territory controlled by the enemy so as to deny him access to, and free use of, the water routes.

There is a difference between the terms base area and guerrilla area. An area completely surrounded by territory occupied by the enemy is a 'base area'. Wu Tai Shan, and Taiheng Shan are examples of base areas. On the other hand, the area east and north of Wu Tai Shan (the Shansi-Hopeh-Chahar border zone) is a guerrilla area. Such areas can be controlled by guerrillas only while they actually physically occupy them. Upon their departure, control reverts to a puppet pro-Japanese government. East Hopeh, for example, was at first a guerrilla area rather than a base area. A puppet government functioned there. Eventually, the people, organized and inspired by guerrillas from the Wu Tai mountains, assisted in the transformation of this guerrilla area into a real base area. Such a task is extremely difficult, for it is largely dependent upon the degree to which the people can be inspired. In certain garrisoned areas, such as the cities and zones contiguous to the railways, the guerrillas see unable to drive the Japanese and puppets out. These areas remain guerrilla areas. At other times, base areas might become guerrilla areas due either to our own mistakes or to the activities of the enemy.

Obviously, in any given area in the war zone, any one or three situations may develop: The area may remain in Chinese hands; it may be lost to the Japanese and puppets or it may be divided between the combatants. Guerrilla leaders should endeavour to see that either the first or the last of these situations is assured.

Another point essential in the establishment of bases is the co-operation that must exist between the armed guerrilla bands and the people. All our strength must be used

to spread the doctrine of armed resistance to Japan, to arm the people, to organize self-defence units, and to train guerrilla bands. This doctrine must be spread among the people, who must be organized into anti-Japanese groups. Their political instincts must be sharpened and their martial ardour increased. If the workers, the farmers, the lovers of liberty, the young men, the women, and the children are not organized, they will never realize their own anti-Japanese power. Only the united strength of the people can eliminate traitors, recover the measure of political power that has been lost, and conserve and improve what we still retain.

We have already touched on geographic factors in our discussion of bases, and we must also mention the economic aspects of the problem. What economic policy should be adopted? Any such policy must offer reasonable protection to commerce and business. We interpret 'reasonable protection' to mean the people must contribute money in proportion to the money they have. Farmers will be required to furnish a certain share of their crops to guerrilla troops. Confiscation, except in the case of business run by traitors, is prohibited.

Our activities must be extended over the entire periphery of the base area if we wish to attack the enemy's bases and thus strengthen and develop our own. This will afford us opportunity to organize, equip, and train the people, thus furthering guerrilla policy as well as the national policy of protected war. At times, we must emphasize the development and extension of base areas; at other times, the organization, training, or equipment of the people.

Each guerrilla base will have its own peculiar problems of attack and defence. In general, the enemy, in an endeavour to consolidate his gains, will attempt to extinguish guerrilla bases by dispatching numerous bodies of troops over a number of different routes. This must be anticipated and the encirclement broken by counter-attacks. As such enemy columns are without reserves, we should plan on using our main forces to attack one of them by surprise and devote our secondary effort to continual hindrance and harassment. At the same time, other forces should isolate enemy garrison troops and operate on their lines of supply and communication. When one column has been disposed of, we may turn our attention to one of the others. In a

base area as large as Wu Tat Shan, for example, there are four or five military subdivisions. Guerrillas in these sub-divisions must co-operate to form a primary force to counterattack the enemy, or the area from which he came, while a secondary force harasses and hinders him.

After defeating the enemy in any area, we must take advantage of the period he requires for reorganization to press home our attacks. we must not attack an objective we are not certain of winning. We must confine our operations to relatively small areas and destroy the enemy and traitors in those places.

When the inhabitants have been inspired, new volunteers accepted trained, equipped, and organized, our operations may be extended to include cities and lines of communication not strongly held. We may hold these at least for temporary (if not for permanent) periods. All these are our duties in offensive strategy. Their object is to lengthen the period that the enemy must remain on the defensive. Then our military activities and our organization work among the masses of the people must be zealously expanded; and with equal zeal, the strength of the enemy attacked and diminished. It is of great importance that guerrilla units be rested and instructed. During such times as the enemy is on the defensive, the troops may get some rest and instruction may be carried out.

The development of mobile warfare is not only possible but essential. This is the case because our current war is a desperate and protracted struggle. If China were able to conquer the Japanese bandits speedily and to recover her lost territories, there would there would be no question of long-term war on a national scale. Hence there would no question of the relation of guerrilla hostilities into mobile warfare of an orthodox nature, both the quantity and quality of guerrilla must be improved. Primarily, more men must join the armies; then the quality of equipment and standards of training must be improved. Political training must be emphasized and our organization, the technique of handling our weapons, our tactics — all must be improved. Our internal discipline must be strengthened. The soldiers must be educated politically. There must be a gradual change from guerrilla formations to orthodox regimental organization. The necessary bureaus and staffs, both political and military, must be

provided. At the same time, attention must be paid to the creation of suitable supply, medical, and hygiene units. The standards of equipment must be raised and types of weapons increased. Communication equipment must not be forgotten. Orthodox standards of discipline must be established.

Because guerrilla formations act independently and because they are the most elementary of armed formations, command cannot be too highly centralized. If it were, guerrilla action would be too limited in scope. At the same time, guerrilla activities, to be most effective, must be co-ordinated, not only in so far as they themselves are concerned, but additionally with regular troops operating in the same areas. This co-ordination is a function of the war zone commander and his staff.

In guerrilla base areas, the command must be centralized for strategical purposes and decentralized for tactical purposes. Centralized strategical command takes care of the general management of all guerrilla units, their co-ordination within war zones, and the general policy regarding guerrilla base areas. Beyond this, centralization of command will result in interference with subordinate units, as, naturally, the tactics to apply to concrete situations can be determined only as these various situations arise. This is true in orthodox warfare when communications between lower and higher echelons break down. In a word, proper guerrilla policy will provide for unified strategy and independent activity.

Each guerrilla area is divided into districts and these in turn are divided into sub-districts. Each sub-division has its appointed commander, and while general plans are made by higher commanders, the nature of actions is determined by inferior commanders. The former may suggest the nature of the action to be taken but cannot define it. Thus inferior groups have more or less complete local control.

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Mao Tse-tung On Guerrilla Warfare

Appendix

TABLE — I

ORGANIZATION OF AN INDEPENDENT GUERRILLA COMPANY

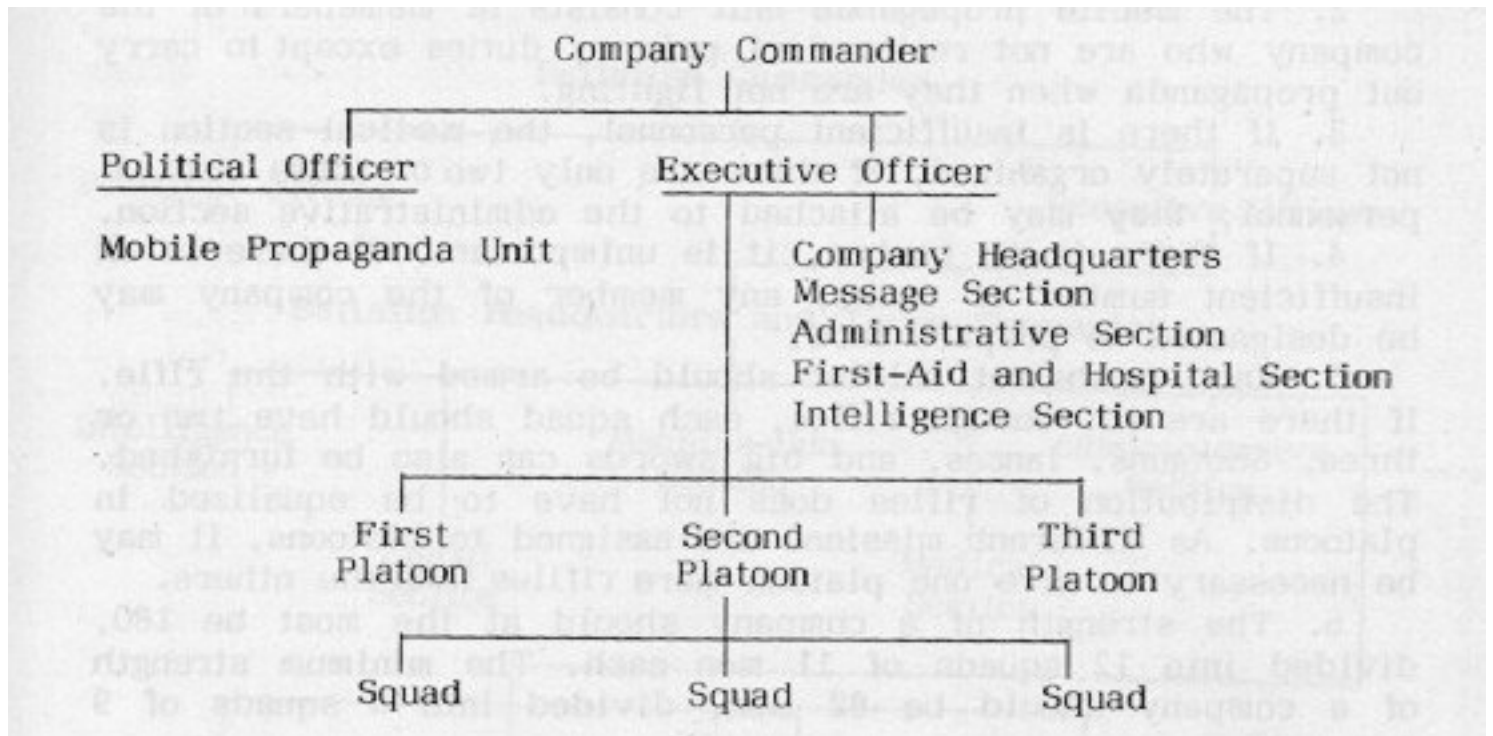


TABLE OF ORGANIZATION, GUERRILLA COMPANY

RANK	PERSONNEL	ARM
Company Leader	1	Pistol
Political Officer	1	Pistol
Executive Officer	1	Pistol
Company Headquarters		
Message Section Chief	1	
Signal	1	
Administrative Section Chief	1	Rifle
Public Relations	3	Rifle
Duty Personnel	2	
Barber	1	
Cooks	10	
Medical Section Chief	1	
Assistant	1	
First Aid and Nursing	4	
Intelligence Section Chief	1	Rifle
Intelligence	9	Rifle

Platoon Leaders	3	Rifle
Squad Leaders	9	Rifle
Nine Squads (8 each)	72	Rifle
TOTAL	122	3 Pistols 98 Rifles

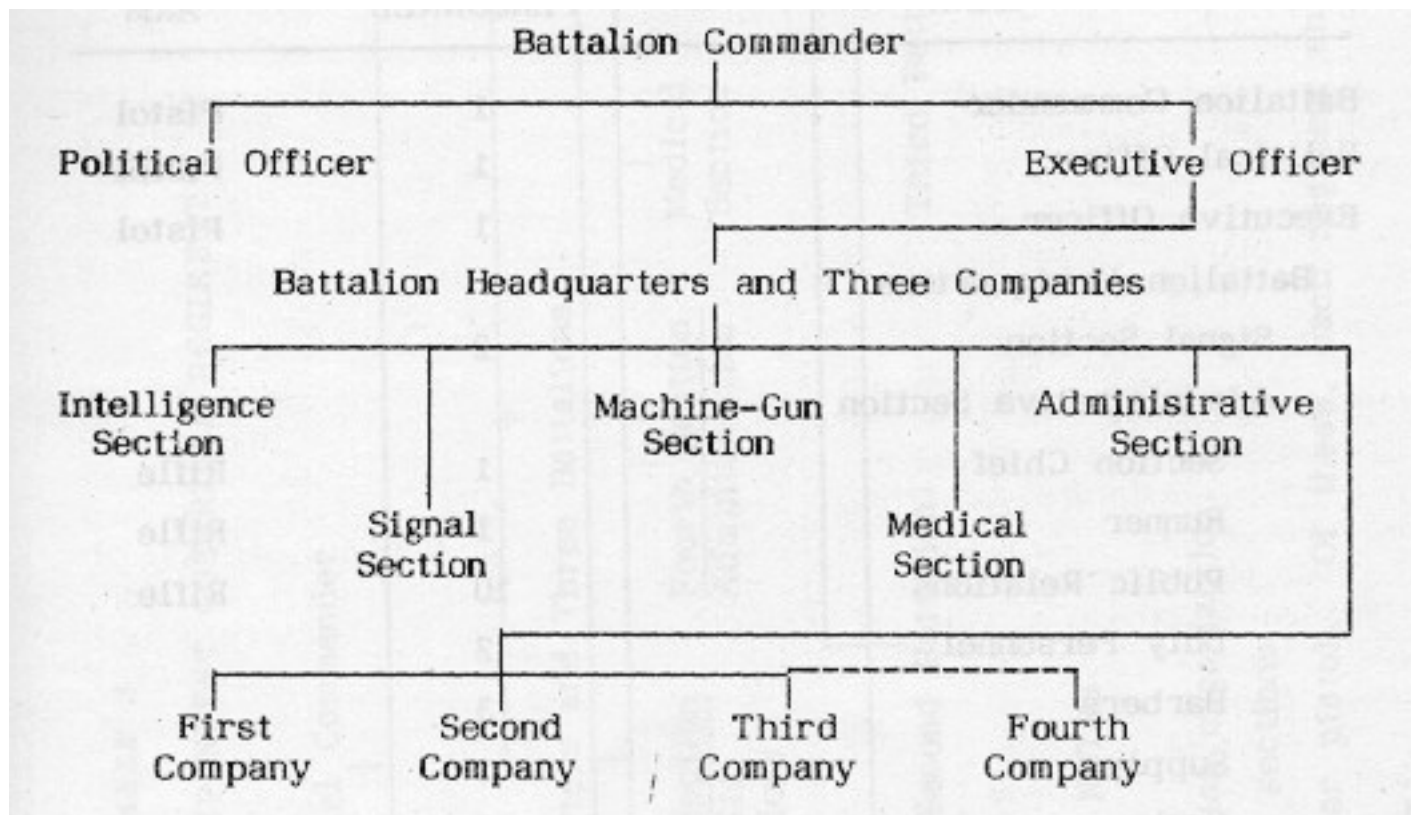
NOTES

1. Each squad consists of from 9 to 11 men. In case men or arms are not sufficient, the third platoon may be dispensed with or one squad organized as company headquarters.
2. The mobile propaganda unit consists of members of the Company who are not relieved of primary duties except to carry out propaganda when they are not fighting.
3. If there is insufficient personnel, the medical section is not separately organized. If there are only two or three medical personnel, they may be attached to the administrative section.
4. If there is no barber, it is unimportant. If there is an insufficient number of cooks, any member of the company may be designated to prepare food.
5. Each combatant soldier should be armed with the rifle. If there are not enough rifles, each squad should have two or three. Shotguns, lances, and big swords can also be furnished. The distribution of rifles does not have to be equalized in platoons . As different missions are assigned to platoons, it may be necessary to give one platoon more rifles than the others.
6. The strength of a company should at the most be 180, divided into 12 squads of 11 men each. The minimum strength of a company should be 82 men, divided into 6

squads of 9 men each.

TABLE 2

ORGANIZATION OF AN INDEPENDENT GUERRILLA BATTALION



NOTES

1. Total headquarters of an independent guerrilla battalion may vary from a minimum of 46 to a maximum of 110.
2. When there are 4 companies to a battalion, regimental organization should be used.
3. Machine-gun squads may be heavy or light. A light machine-gun squad has from 5 to 7 men. A heavy machine-gun squad has from 7 to 9 men.

4. The intelligence section is organized in from 2 to 4 squads, at least one of which is made up of plain-clothed men. If horses are available, one squad should be mounted.
5. If no men are available for stretcher-bearers, omit them and use the cooks or ask aid from the people.
6. Each company must have at least 25 rifles. The remaining weapons may be fowling -pieces, etc., big swords, or locally made shotguns.

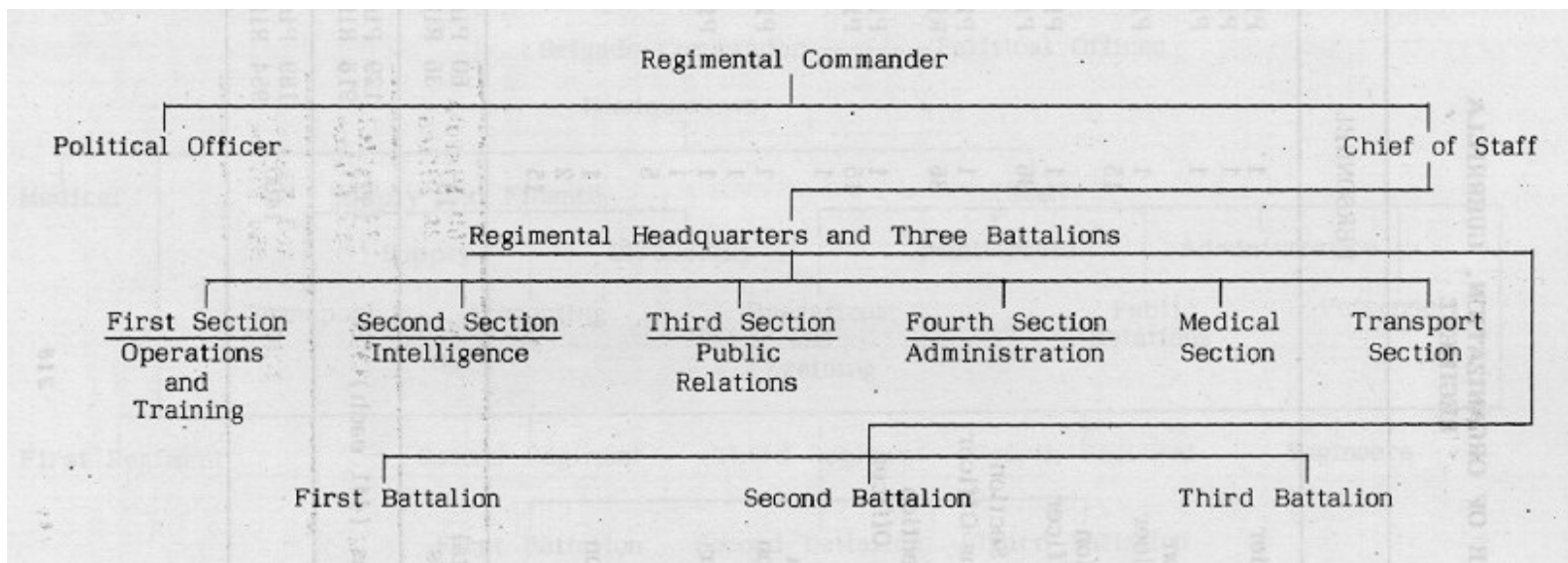
TABLE OF ORGANIZATION, GUERRILLA BATTALION (INDEPENDENT)

RANK	PERSONNEL	ARM
Battalion Commander	1	Pistol
Political Officer	1	Pistol
Executive Officer	1	Pistol
Battalion Headquarters		
Signal Section	2	
Administrative Section		
Section Chief	1	Rifle
Runner	1	Rifle
Public Relations	10	Rifle
Duty Personnel	2	
Barbers	3	
Supply	1	
Cooks	10	
Medical Section		

Medical Officer	1	
Stretcher-bearers	6	
Nursing	4	
Intelligence Section		
Section Chief	1	Pistol
Intelligence	30	Pistol
Machine-gun Section	As Available	As Available
Total, Headquarters	75	34 Pistols 12 Rifles
Three Companies (122 each)	366	9 Pistols 294 Rifles
TOTAL	441	43 Pistols 306 Rifles

TABLE 3

**ORGANIZATION OF
AN INDEPENDENT GUERRILLA REGIMENT**



NOTES

1. See Tables 1 and 2 for company and battalion organization.
2. Battalions and companies have no transport sections.
3. The hand weapon may be either revolver or pistol. Of these, each regiment should have more than 100.

TABLE OF ORGANIZATION, GUERRILLA REGIMENT

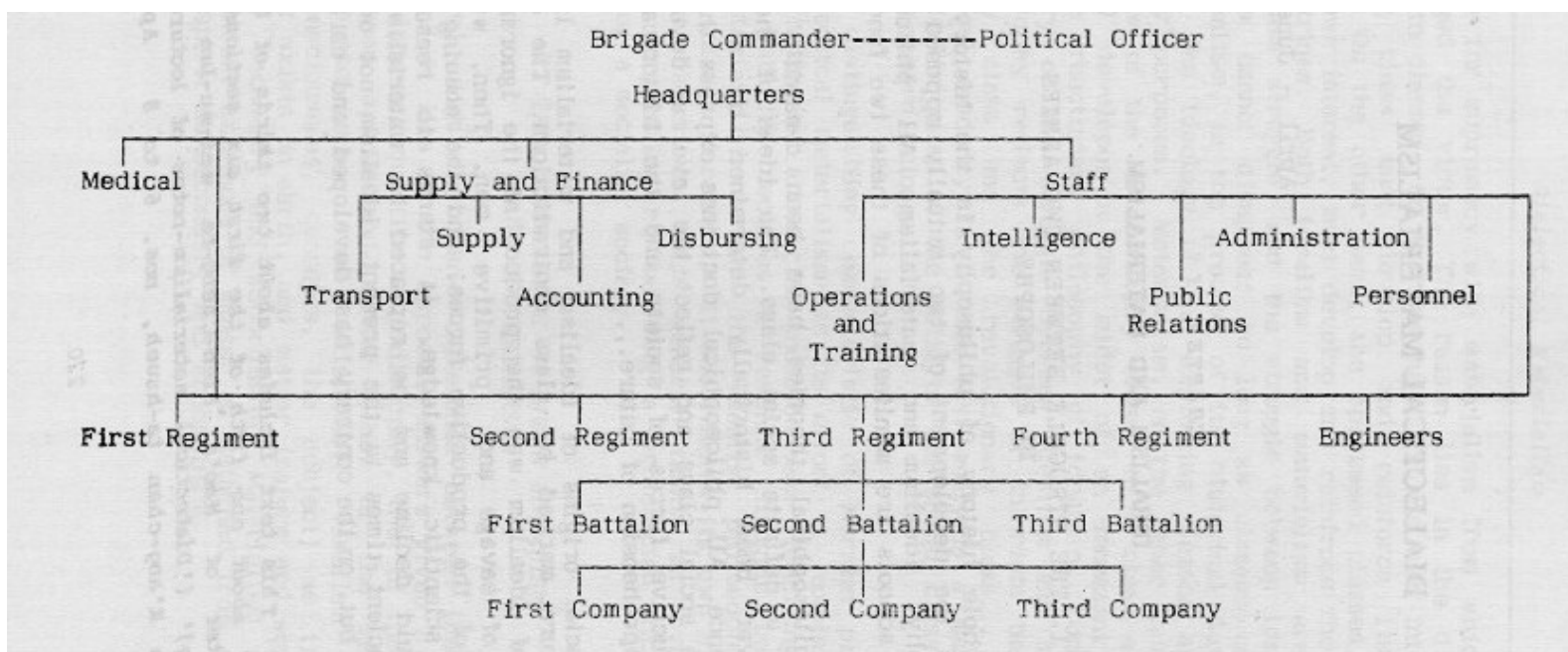
RANK	PERSONNEL	ARM
Regimental Commander	1	Pistol
Political Officer	1	Pistol
Chief of Staff	1	Pistol

Operations Section		
Operations Officer	1	Pistol
Clerks	15	
Intelligence Section		
Intelligence Officer	1	Pistol
Personnel	36	Pistols
Public-Relations Section		
Public-Relations Officer	1	Pistol
Personnel	36	Rifles
Administrative Section		
Administrative Officer	1	Pistol
Clerks	15	Pistols
Runner	1	
Transport Section		
Chief of Section	1	Pistol
Finance	1	
Traffic Manager	1	Pistol
Supply	1	
Drivers	5	
Medical Section		
Chief of Section	1	
Doctors	2	
Nurses	15	
Total, Regimental Headquarters	137	60 Pistols 36 Rifles

Three Battalions (441 each)	1323	129 Pistols 918 Rifles
TOTAL	1460	189 Pistols 954 Rifles

TABLE 4.

ORGANIZATION OF INDEPENDENT GUERRILLA BRIGADE (OR DIVISION)



[End]

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