COLOMBIA
TURNING DEFEAT
INTO VICTORY IN
CONTEMPORARY
WARFARE

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Panel 3: Qualitative Assessments of Contemporary Warfare

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WITH U.S. ASSISTANCE, ONE OF THE OLDEST AND LARGEST INSURGENT GROUPS IN THE WORLD, FARC, HAS BEEN DECIMATED AND FORCED TO THE MARGINS OF SOCIETY.
FARC a combination of the new and the old

- **Ideology**: Marxist-Leninist but becomes “Bolivarian”
- **Political** but gun dominates
- “People’s war” but terrorism leads
- **Fighting for the people** but drugs & criminality funds
- Can recruit but always from the margin of the margins
1965-1995, TERROR & GUERRILLA WAR DOMINATE
1996: WAR OF MOVEMENT
FARC

DISPOSITION

CARIBE
NOROCCIDENTAL
MAG. MEDIO
CDO. C. CENTRAL
CDO. C. OCCID.
SUR
ORIENTAL

BLOQUES DE FRENTE 5
CDOS. CONJUNTOS 2
BLOQUES MOVILES 2
CUADRILLAS 67
COLUMNAS 14
COMPANÍAS 19
FRENTES URB. 4
UNIDADES 2
ESCUELA 1

~17.000 cbts
Key Factor in Reversal: NEW LEADERSHIP
Paradigm Shift Critical

• “We were using American doctrine, where we conceptualized the continuum as ‘war’ and ‘other than war.’ This was absolutely incorrect. There is only war, with the enemy fielding different mixes of the elements of war.”

Source: Counterterrorism – Fall 2006, Vol 12/No 3

Posiciones

Movimiento
- CAPITAL DE DEPARTAMENTO
- BASES FIJAS
- BATALLÓN SOLDADOS PROFESIONALES
- ESTACIÓN REPETIDORA (INACESIBLE)
- CP. SOLDADOS PROFESIONALES (MOVIMIENTO)
- CP. SOLDADOS REGULARES (BASES FIJAS)
- MIRAFLORES
- EL BILLAR
- MITU
- PUERTO RICO PUERTO LLERAS
- HATO COROZAL
- OFENSIVAS
- SUMAPAZ
- BERLÍN (DESTRUCCIÓN COLUMNA)
- GATO NEGRO
- TSUMANI

Guerrillas y Terrorismo
- ATACAR GENERANDO PODER DE COMBATE
- COMBATIR CUADRILAS
- CONTRAMANIOBRAS
- POCA DURACIÓN
- COMBATES PROLONGADOS
- MUCHAS BAJAS
- SE BUSCA CAMPO COMBATE
- ATAQUE ÁREAS BÁSICAS
Conditions For Military Success

- New Leadership w/Effective Approach
- New Structure
- New Manpower
- Renewed Emphasis Upon Training
- Incorporation of Lessons Learned
- Greater Mobility
- New Spirit
OTHER CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS

• INTELLIGENCE WAR – correct assessment of challenge
• INFORMATION WAR - PSYOPS
• BATTLE FOR URBAN SPACE - POLICE
• SPECIAL OPERATIONS
• CIVIC ACTION
FOR STATE SUCCESS:
Leadership
Uribe – Aug 02

• Runs on “War” Platform – FARC Main Foe
• Negotiations w/AUC & ELN
• Emphasis Upon Economy & Social Programs
• Enhanced Funding, Manpower (e.g. BCGs)
• Combined Civil-Military Effort – A PLAN!
• Local Forces & Joint Commands
• Altered Legal Environment
• Human Rights Put in Perspective
STRATEGY OF THE DEMOCRATIC SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY

1. Democratic Security
2. Social Policy
3. Fiscal Stability

Confidence
Private Investment
Employment and Economic Activity
THE FORMULA

• LACK OF PERSONAL SECURITY is the root of Colombia’s ESP ills.
• This LACK OF PERSONAL SECURITY stems from state absence in large areas.
• Therefore, ALL ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL POWER will end this absence thru NATIONAL INTEGRATION.
IMPLEMENTING THE FORMULA

• Step 1: RESTORE STATE PRESENCE, starting in strategically important areas.
• Step 2: ONCE YOU GET AN AREA, DOMINATE THE AREA with security forces, so that state and legal authorities can function.
• Step 3: ONCE YOU DOMINATE AN AREA, make all the other parts of democracy work so that we may have truth, justice, and the Colombian way – and win the World Cup.
Lead Weapon: Democracy

240 visits in First Term

ALL POLITICS IS LOCAL

COUNCILS OF SECURITY
CONSEJOS DE SEGURIDAD

SEGURIDAD DEMOCRÁTICA

COUNCILS OF POPULAR GOVERNANCE

CONSEJOS COMUNALES DE GOBIERNO

SOCIAL
FUNDAMENTAL REALITY: STATE LEGITIMACY
SECURITY FORCES ENABLE POLITICS
FOR THOSE WHO NEED A FORMULA

• STRATEGICALLY: Win the battle for *LEGITIMACY*

• OPERATIONALLY: Neutralize the counter-state (eliminate the grievances; use population & resources control; apply appropriate military measures)

• TACTICALLY: Systematically dominate local areas
APPLYING THE FORMULA TO COLOMBIA

• STRATEGICALLY: LEGITIMACY
  – has come with good governance
• OPERATIONALLY: Counter-state being neutralized
  – but controversial
  ♠ eliminate the grievances
    – never possible totally
  ♠ exercise population & resources control
    – controversial
    – “cause-oriented groups” will always oppose
  ♠ apply appropriate military measures
    – what’s “appropriate”?
• TACTICALLY: Systematically dominating local areas
  – slow, costly, manpower intensive
Fundamental Shift in Nature of Conflict

COLOMBIAN ASSESSMENT: FARC BEGAN AS AN INSURGENCY WITH A SOCIAL BASE (EVEN IF LIMITED)

• DRUG TRAFFICKING AROSE TO MEET NEED FOR RESOURCES

• CREATED GREAT CONFUSION BETWEEN MEANS AND ENDS

NO LONGER REPRESENTS THE MASSES

“THE STRUGGLE” BECOMES ENDS, WAYS, MEANS

ORGANIZATION IS “THE WORLD” ALL OTHERS ARE THE ENEMY

NOW TERRORISTS DIVORCED FROM ANY SOCIAL BASE
2002-2006
SMASHING OF
FARC MILITARY
CHALLENGE
ALLOWS 2006-2010
EMPHASIS ON
SPEC OPS
SPECIAL OPERATIONS WERE VERY SUCCESSFUL IN 2007 AND 2008

July 2008

OPERACION JACQUE
WITHOUT REGIONAL “BOLIVARIAN” SUPPORT, FARC IN DEEP TROUBLE

SPEC OPS EVEN MORE IMPT AS STRATEGIC SITUATION SHIFTS
SPECIAL OPERATIONS
BEYOND THE BORDERS

BRAZIL
1.645 Km.

PERÚ
1.626 Km.

ECUADOR
586 Km.

Mar Caribe
589.560 km²

2004
VENEZUELA
2.219 Km.

MALPELO

GORGONA

2005

2008
ECUADOR
586 Km.

Océano Pacífico
339.100 km²

Bogotá

BRAZIL
1.645 Km.
VERY IMPORTANT: FENIX & KIA RAUL REYES
LESSONS FOR CONTEMPORARY WARFARE: BACK TO THE FUTURE

• GET IN PLACE THAT WHICH IS CORRECT
• GET IN PLACE THAT WHICH IS SUSTAINABLE
• PLAY FOR THE BREAKS

SIR ROBERT THOMPSON to MARKS