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THE LOW FRONTIER OF UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE

The bombing in Beirut should remind us that we face a third dimension in warfare in addition to strategic (nuclear) and conventional (non-nuclear). Usually called unconventional warfare, General John K. Singlaub also calls it the "low frontier."

Unconventional warfare has many faces. It includes terrorism, sabotage, guerrilla actions, passive resistance, and support of dissident groups. It also includes economic warfare, political warfare, psychological operations, subversion, disinformation activities, and propaganda.

The Soviets have a full-scale operation in all types of unconventional warfare. It is probable that the Soviets have just as much a margin of superiority over us in this third dimension of warfare as they do in ICBMs and in tanks.

The Soviets are quite familiar with the writings of the ancient Chinese military strategist, Sun Tzu (350 B.C.), who said that the best general is he who avoids violence and achieves conquest by surrender of the enemy.

A major part of the Soviets' unconventional warfare against us since the end of World War II has been a "peace offensive." Years ago, Louis Budenz, former managing editor of the Communist Daily Worker, titled his book "The Cry is Peace" to describe this Soviet propaganda campaign. Like the thief who cries "Stop, thief!" to distract attention from his crime, the Soviets accuse America of disrupting world peace.

Of course, there are different kinds of peace. We certainly don't want the peace of surrender as they have in North Korea, North Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Cuba, Angola, and Eastern Europe. Nor do we want the peace of the 1,500 slave labor camps that form the Gulag Archipelago.

The chief weakness of the Russian empire is the yearning for freedom of the captive peoples behind the Iron Curtain. If the Soviets were confronted with ten satellite problems like the resistance in Afghanistan and Poland, there would be rampant panic in the Kremlin.

General Singlaub believes that Western strategy must recognize the entire spectrum of conflict and exploit the weaknesses of the enemy. In a recent speech, he made constructive suggestions for an American strategy to cope with the third dimension.

1. Adopt a national strategy which recognizes the entire spectrum of conflict, and has a policy for dealing with all facets, including the low frontier of unconventional conflict (as well as strategic and conventional). Our strategy must have a sound, offensive non-military component.

2. Exploit the weaknesses of the Soviet empire. No football game was ever won by a team which stayed on its own side of the 50-yard line. The Achilles heel of the Russian empire is the disaffection of the peoples behind the Iron Curtain; the captive peoples behind the Iron Curtain are our best allies.

3. Stop the process of our self-surrender through subsidizing the Communist system. We must limit the flow of technology, food, and credits to the U.S.S.R.

4. Face up to the fact that Mainland China will never be a U.S. ally under any scenario that one could reasonably imagine. Such wishful thinking is a real danger to our security.

5. Recognize that the centerpiece of Soviet ideology is the continuing "class struggle." The Soviets are at war all the time, even when they are not using guns.

6. Use the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe to counteract Soviet and Chinese disinformation. VOA and RFE broadcasts should explain the facts and tell the results of political and economic freedom.

7. Beef up the special operations forces in our Army, Navy, and Air Force; and reestablish the intelligence collection capabilities of the CIA.

8. Loosen legislative restraints which frustrate our ability to defend American diplomatic and military personnel in other countries. For example, current law forbids us to use U.S. funds to train police forces in other countries (even though some small countries cannot afford to train their own police sufficiently to provide local protection to our embassies). The recent bombing in Beirut was the 50th attack on our embassies abroad in recent years.