

CHAPTER -VII

CONCLUSION

"You can indeed conduct effective diplomacy under the sound of gun"

- Ryan Croker, US Ambassador to Afghanistan, Time magazine, Oct 2010.

In the last sixty years, Indian government has been struggling to contain the insurgency in various parts of the country. Except for the state of Punjab, insurgency could not be contained in the country and on the contrary, we have witnessed widespread growth of LWE insurgency across many states in the central India. Lack of political will and stereotype approach to this conflict has resulted in continued struggle for our nation. Similar situation in Sri Lanka was effectively brought under control with the use offensive action supported by the kinetic air power. Actually the use of kinetic air power has not been thought of as a serious option to counter LWE insurgency in our country. Currently, the greatest obstacles in doing this mission are not material ones, but what lies in our own minds and our own political cultures. The air power is trained and well equipped to fight insurgencies against state and non state actors. Yet, in order to fight naxals well, our government will have to re-orient some of our efforts towards these largely neglected military specialty which could become a game changer in fight against insurgents.

It is also a fact that "The American effort in Vietnam was the best that modern military science could offer. The array of sophisticated weapons used against the enemy boggles the mind. US combat units applied massive firepower using the most advanced scientific methods available at that time. Military and civilian managers employed the most advanced techniques of management science to support combat units in the field. The result was an almost unbroken series of American victories that somehow became

irrelevant to the war. In the end, the best that military science could offer was still not good enough⁵³.

How could a world Super Power lose a war to a third or fourth rate military power? Despite the many analyses of the Vietnam war produced by the military, none has adequately considered the fundamental question of how the U.S. could so completely dominate the battlefield and yet lose the war.

Technological advancements in airpower in the last couple of decades significantly impacts airpower utilisation. Improved accuracy of guidance systems, increased endurance of the delivery platforms and reduced reaction times, along with improvements in command and control infrastructure, have increased the range of employment options for airpower. It is said that every military decision has moral, mental, and physical effects which will determine the course of the battle, with moral being the most powerful and physical the least powerful. *It is very important to offset the effects of defensive firepower by winning the moral battle.* A consensus seems to exist that "the population" is the common center of gravity for insurgents, as well as counterinsurgents⁵⁴. Therefore, the defensive fire power application must be balanced by the IAF as well as govt.

While there is no fixed solution to counter-insurgency, there is certainly a larger role for air power. Air power can bring firepower, transport, reconnaissance and constant presence to the fight; and these are the things that the counter-insurgency force needs. But the unique capability of air power to bring accurate fire power at the designated place within a short time would be undoubtedly to bring about a paradigm shift in countering LWE threats. This is reason why air power has played an important and at times decisive role in many past coercive operations⁵⁵. Therefore, the political leadership in

⁵³ <http://forum.prisonplanet.com/index.php?topic=184168.0>

⁵⁴ Nofi Albert. Op Cit.

⁵⁵ Daniel L Byman, et al. Air Power as a Coercive Instrument. Published by RAND Corporation. 1999. Pp 126.

India must feel confident about the effectiveness of the air power against LWE threats. **Given the state of urgency and limitation posed by terrain in conduct of ground operation, air power must be utilised in both non-kinetic and defensive fire power role where ever required.**

Finally, It is clarified that the views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the author and the ideas which have been discussed, expressed or recommended in this dissertation do not represent the official views / policy or position of the Indian Air Force as also the faculty at IIPA and therefore, should not be construed as one. Further, they also do not reflect the views of Ministry of Defence, or the Indian Government. They purely reflect the views of the researcher on various issues deliberated in this dissertation and are product of personal assessment of the researched subject.