

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

"When employing the Army in LICO, conflict management rather than conflict resolution will be the political objective. Therefore, operational objectives and intensity of operations should be oriented towards achieving a qualitative improvement in the situation which may not necessarily be possible in a short timeframe. It will be preferable to aim at low profile and people-friendly operations rather than high intensity operations related only to body and weapon counts."⁴⁷

Given the present state of affairs in the country LIC is here to stay. The conflict situations will continue to provide multi-dimensional challenges to the Army in dealing with subversion, terrorism and militancy where the men in uniform will get involved over protracted periods. The armed forces will continue to fight with virtually their hands tied behind their back in view of several immunities to the militants, inadequate support from civilians, adverse media coverage, intelligence vacuum, lack of clear political directive *et al.* The complex situations which have given rise to many psychological problems will continue to plague the Army. In such a hostile and adverse atmosphere, our soldiers need to be highly motivated and a high degree of man management by the leadership is required to combat insurgency and its attendant problems.

At a macro level, LICs are a serious threat to regional political stability and a big drain on the country's economy. Moreover, they generate social tensions, dividing people along caste, ethnic, communal, sectarian and regional lines. They need to be tackled in a comprehensive manner. India will have to evolve a long-term policy for tackling LICs, and has to examine the basic causes that have led people in a particular area to take up arms. These causes should be analyzed threadbare and the legitimate grievances addressed. At the same time, there should be a conscious effort to bring disaffected groups into the national mainstream without snapping their cultural moorings. LIC operations should be well orchestrated, with complete unity of command at the apex. Human rights must be respected and there should be no

⁴⁷ *Indian Army Doctrine* published by HQ Army Training Command, 2006.

recourse to short-cut methods. Intelligence available with different agencies should be pooled together. External support, where it exists, must be cut-off. The local police needs to be energized and motivated to engage the insurgent outfits. The paramilitary forces require greater mobility, weaponry and improved communications. It will also have to be ensured that the right force is deployed at the right place. There is also an urgent need to reform the civil administration in order to make it more loyal, committed and responsive to the aspirations of the people⁴⁸.

To that extent, Government of India claims to have a multi-dimensional strategy to tackle the situation. It includes, *inter alia*, strengthening the border management, neutralizing the militants by proactive action against them, gearing up the intelligence machinery, reorganizing the police forces and giving them sharper teeth, providing the Village Defence Committee with sophisticated weapons and integrating them with the counter-insurgency grid, greater functional integration through an improved institutional framework at the Unified Headquarters and, at the same time, accelerating the economic development of the affected states⁴⁹. Several new measures have been taken by the Government to strengthen the security apparatus of the country to equip it to meet the grave challenges posed by global terrorism. These include operationalization of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), establishment of four National Security Guards (NSG) Hubs to ensure quick and effective response to any possible terror attack, augmentation of the strength of Intelligence Bureau (IB), strengthening of the Multi-Agency Centre in the IB to enable it to function on 24 X 7 basis and strengthening of coastal security. The Centre has taken some major initiatives to deal with the menace of Naxalism and, instituted a joint action plan to kick off coordinated and combined action, especially at the bi-junctions and tri-junctions of the affected States. Funds are being provided to the States under the Police Modernization Scheme to modernize their police forces in terms of modern weaponry, latest communication equipment, mobility and other infrastructure.⁵⁰

In the mean time, it is the responsibility of the Army to take care of its problem of combat stress and related man management challenges. First thing is to admit the

⁴⁸ *An Indian Assessment of Low Intensity Conflicts & High Intensity Crime* by Prakash Singh* in *Faultline* Volume 5.

⁴⁹ Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, *Annual Report 1998-99*, p.26.

⁵⁰ Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, *Annual Report 2009-10*, p.6-7.

fact that there is a problem – a problem of combat stress and related man management issues. Secondly, it must identify measures to be implemented, some of which have been outlined in this study, to minimize this problem since elimination would be nigh impossible. And lastly, it must follow up on these measures on a war footing *without creating yet another cause for stress*. Charity begins at home. So, before one can point a finger at the government for its apathy and partisan approach to all problems military, we must put our house in order first.. To mitigate stress and related man management problem, we need to change faster than the world, capitalise on our inherent strengths and reduce the operational commitments to a manageable level. *It's a mental and attitudinal battle whose result is not dependent on government largesse but hinges on our own ability to swiftly reform the organisation*⁵¹.

'Nations customarily measure the "costs of war" in dollars, lost production, or the number of soldiers killed or wounded.' But 'rarely do military establishments attempt to measure the costs of war in terms of individual suffering. Psychiatric breakdowns remain one of the most costly items of war when expressed in human terms.' Around the world the price of civilization is being paid every day by military units in LIC/ peace-keeping operations and paramilitary and police forces that are forced to engage in close combat. There have been and will continue to be times and places where combat is unavoidable, but when a society requires its security forces to participate in combat, it is essential to fully comprehend the magnitude of the inevitable psychological toll. Denial of the psychological consequences of combat may be perilous⁵².

⁵¹ 'Stress Management in the Armed Forces' by Maj Shailender Arya, Journal of the United Service Institution of India,

⁵² Gabriel RA. *No More Heroes: Madness and Psychiatry in War*. New York: Hill & Wang; 1987.