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Asymmetric Warfare: The Slovak Perspective

By/par Col Petr Fajmon

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Abstract

Asymmetric warfare is the term, which was discovered by military theorists in the late 90s' of the 20 Century. Through an operational analysis of some historical war events during the 20th Century, this paper argues that this form of warfare is not a new phenomenon in contemporary military conflict, and that the new 21st Century terrorism employs this form of warfare. This paper extrapolates some general cases in asymmetric warfare, which are timeless.

At a time when the Slovak Armed Forces enters in the process of rejuvenating the old regulations inherited from the Warsaw Treaty period to develop a new doctrine based on NATO principles, it is crucial to integrate these enduring elements of asymmetric warfare in order to be able to respond adequately to new and growing asymmetric threats generated by corrupt nations and/or non-state organization/actors.

The Slovak Armed Forces prepare their significant part, according to the decision of the Slovak government, for expeditionary task in international peace operations. This is the reason that the Slovak Armed Forces must react to the current development of new asymmetric combat methods, which are used in local wars nowadays. Some examples from the last century serve to demonstrate that only fully prepared armed forces are able to react to unusual methods of combat. This paper is written for a Canadian military audience, so the author chose historical examples of well-known cases from recent history.

*Historia est testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriae, magistra vitae, nuntia
velustatis*

Marcus Tullius Cicero

1. Introduction

The history of warfare is as old as the history of humanity itself. Warfare began with the combat between different tribes thousands of years ago. Military activity has constantly evolved over time. The development of military weapons has also progressed, as has the beginning and development of military art. The term “military art” is usually understood as the theory and practice of preparing and conducting military operations on land, at sea, and in the air. Sometimes it is difficult to determine if theory precedes practice. Sometimes it is theory, other times it is practice. From the inception of warfare, historians have attempted to describe attempts by the weaker opponent in a military conflict to attack its powerful opponent’s vulnerable point. Frequently, force imbalance between the belligerents did not dictate superiority. Some force superiority is derived from the quality and quantity of weapons, others from the members and quality of the armed forces or a combination of both.

The term “asymmetric warfare” was first used in the document Quadrennial Defense Review in 1997.¹ Currently, it is often mentioned in military documents, and in many media sources. What is asymmetric warfare in reality? It is possible to apply the US definition:

¹ William S. Cohen, *Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review*, Report for US Government (Washington D. C.: Department of Defense, 1997), V.

“In the realm of military affairs and national security is acting, organizing, and thinking differently than opponents in order to maximize one’s own advantages, exploit an opponent’s weaknesses, attain the initiative, or gain greater freedom of action. It can be political-strategic, military strategic, operational, or combination of these. It can entail different methods, technologies, values, organizations, time perspectives, or some combination of these. It can be short-term or long-term. It can be deliberate or by default. It can be discrete or pursued in conjunction with symmetric approaches. It can have both psychological and physical dimensions.”²

The characteristics of asymmetric operations are actions of small tactical units against vulnerable positions of their stronger opponents. Their aim is to effectively break down the will of the opponent and thus attain their strategic goal. Asymmetric methods of combat are used at all levels of war or conflict. According to McKenzie, five issues characterize effective asymmetric methods:

- “Disparity of interest is a key factor in assessing an adversary’s incentive to adopt asymmetric approaches;
- The will of the opponent is the ultimate target, and understanding this is fundamental to understanding asymmetric warfare;
- Asymmetric approaches operate on all three levels of war, but seek strategic effect;
- Effectiveness is important in evaluating asymmetric approaches (they don’t always work);
- A dynamic process of threat and response is an inescapable factor in any analysis of asymmetry.”³

The most effective asymmetric operation causes tremendous destruction to the enemy in comparison to the resources, time and money invested by the attacker. The most effective methods target the enemy strategic vulnerabilities, irrespective of the type of conflict. After that differences between levels of war are eliminated. Thus, the aim of asymmetric warfare is to target the vulnerabilities across the spectrum of conflict, from tactical to strategic. Asymmetric actions targeting national security and the aims of the

² Steven Metz and Douglas V. Johnson II, *Asymmetry and U.S. Military Strategy: Definition, Background, and Strategic Concepts*, (Pennsylvania: U.S. Army War College, 2001), 8 – 9.

³ Kenneth F. McKenzie, Jr., *The Revenge of the Melians: Asymmetric Threats and the Next QDR*. (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 2000), 17.

enemy's foreign policy will achieve the strategic objective. A principal focus of these actions is public opinion, which can dramatically influence the results of the conflict. Attacks on operational and tactical combat-level units can also have strategic impact. The most effective asymmetric approach seeks to attain strategic effect regardless of the level on which they occur. This is the ideal asymmetric attack.

Thesis statement

Through an operational analysis of the history of asymmetric warfare during the 20th Century, this paper argues that this form of warfare is not a new phenomenon in contemporary military conflict, and that the new 21st Century terrorism employs this form of warfare. This paper tries to find some general cases in asymmetric warfare, which are timeless.

At a time when the Slovak Armed Forces enter in the process of rejuvenating the old regulations inherited from the Warsaw Treaty period to develop a new doctrine based on NATO principles, it is crucial to integrate these enduring elements of asymmetric warfare in order to be able to respond adequately to new and growing asymmetric threats generated by corrupt nations and/or non-state organization/actors.

2. Intent

The Slovak government decided to train and prepare the significant part of the Slovak Armed Forces for expeditionary task in international peace operations leading NATO or the United Nations (UN). This is the reason why the Slovak Armed Forces must react to the current development of new asymmetric combat methods, which are used in local

wars nowadays. Some examples from the last century serve to demonstrate that only fully prepared armed forces are able to react to unusual methods of combat. This paper is written for Canadian military audience, so the author chose historical examples of well-known cases from recent history.

3. Historical perspective

From 20th Century history, a good example of asymmetric warfare at an operational level is the first German chlorine gas attack in 1915. The idea to use the toxic agent came from Professor Fritz Haber, a future Nobel Prize holder in chemistry⁴. This is where the connection between academic research and the military industrial complex is evident. During World War I, both sides – Central Powers and Triple Entente⁵ - used large quantities of toxic agents.⁶ Where did the idea to use chlorine as a chemical weapon originate? After the war started, the production of the sodium hydroxide increased. Sodium hydroxide was necessary for the production of cellulose, which in turn, was the base for gunpowder. The resulting waste of this production was chlorine. There was no immediate known use for chlorine, so it was simply released into the air. Since the state of war was in effect, people living near the plants producing this chemical had no choice but to accept the situation the way it was and suffer the consequences. Pollutants from the chlorine were most harmful to the people in the Rhine area. Thus, the

⁴ Jeffery K. Smart. "History of Chemical and Biological Warfare: An American Perspective," *The Textbook of Military Medicine*, available from http://www.bordeninstitute.army.mil/cwbw/default_index.htm; Internet; accessed 2 October 2006.

⁵ Central Powers were United Kingdom, France and Russia, Triple Entente were Germany, Austria-Hungary monarchy and

⁶ Kenneth W. Estes, "Biological and Chemical Warfare and Weapons," in *International Encyclopedia of Military History*, 1st ed.

suggestion was made that the armed forces should export the poisonous gas abroad where chlorine would be very useful. According to a newspaper at the time:

“French people should be the ones poisoned by chlorine, not the good citizens of Germany. If chlorine were to be released near the front, with favorable wind direction - towards the French side - the operational impact would be advantageous. Moreover, the armed forces would be paying the production plants for chlorine – the very item that the production companies in fact considered to be waste.”⁷

Walter Nernst, a well-known physical chemist, developed the theory for the use of this chlorine waste. Captain Fritz Haber presented the complete plan to the chief of the General Staff. As a civilian, Professor Fritz Haber was the chief of the Keiser Wilhelm Physical Institute of Berlin, and was respected worldwide as an expert in industrial chemistry. He received a Nobel Prize in chemistry, not for his military activity, but for his work on the high-pressured synthesis of ammonia.

The plan for using chlorine as combat gas was very simple. Chlorine, in its liquid form, was stored in steel bottles under pressure. Upon release, it evaporated. Since chlorine in its gaseous state is heavier than air, it tends to remain close to the ground. After releasing the necessary amount of chlorine and under ideal meteorological conditions (right wind direction and temperature inversion – cold air near the ground with warm air above) the lethal concentration of resulting gas would spread several kilometers deep into the enemy territory.

On 10 March 1915, under the guidance of Captain Fritz Haber, Pioneer Regiment 35 placed 1,600 large and 4,130 small cylinders containing a total of 168 tons of chlorine in

⁷ Aneta Cvachová, “Contribution of Chemical Warfare Agents to Medical Casualties in World War I”, *Vojenské zdravotnické listy* LXXIV, no. 2 [journal on-line]; available from <http://www.pmfhk.cz/VZL/VZL%202005/5%20Cvachov%C3%A1-W.pdf#search=%22Podil%20bojovych%20otravných%20latek%20na%20zdravotnických%20ztratach%20v%20první%20svetové%20valce%22>; accessed 20 September 2006.

the path of the Allied troops defending Ypres, Belgium. Haber also supplied the regiment with Draeger oxygen breathing sets used in mining, and issued small pads coated with sodium thiosulfate, to some members of the surrounding German infantry. These devices had to protect their own soldiers from the poisonous effects of chlorine. Once the cylinders were in place, the Germans then waited for the winds to shift to a westerly direction. The first chemical attack occurred on 22 April 1915. A large cloud of chlorine was released in five minutes. The world was shocked. However, the German staff was not prepared to exploit the effects of the attack. German units began their attack ten minutes after the release of chlorine. Depending on who reported on the casualties, the reports varied and were most favorable to the side reporting it. According to independent reports, there were five thousand soldiers killed and fifteen thousand wounded soldiers along the stretch of the front. The Allies claimed that the number five thousand was probably inflated for propaganda purposes.⁸ The Germans moved ahead without shooting. However, operational reserves were not sufficiently prepared. The attack stopped and the breakthrough of the first battle line was not used for a wide offensive.

This is a good example of an asymmetric warfare method in 1915. However German military theory did not anticipate the effects of this new capability and the initial effort failed to achieve the desired end state. While the Allied command managed to draw on their reserve and thus, stop the attack, they needed to adapt to a new unanticipated form of threat. This example shows how important the moment of surprise is when using a new weapon.

⁸ Jeffery K. Smart. "History of Chemical and Biological Warfare: An American Perspective," *The Textbook of Military Medicine*, available from http://www.bordeninstitute.army.mil/cwbw/default_index.htm; Internet; accessed 2 October 2006

Another example of asymmetric warfare can be found in the guerilla operations of the Vietnamese Communists (i.e. Vietcong) during the Vietnam War. The Vietnam War was a conflict in which North Vietnam and its allies fought against South Vietnam and its allies. North Vietnam's allies included the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. South Vietnam's main allies included the United States, Australia, New Zealand and South Korea. By its end in 1975, the Vietnam War had claimed approximately four million lives.⁹ American combat troops had been involved since 1959, but their presence was at its highest in 1965. The large escalation of the war started in 1964. It began with the Gulf of Tonkin Incident on 2 - 4 August 1964. The Gulf of Tonkin Incident was an alleged pair of attacks by North Vietnamese gunboats on two American destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin.¹⁰ After that, the Johnson Administration decided to increase the number of military units in Vietnam. Despite superior U.S. firepower and technology, the North Vietnamese forces were successful in fighting a protracted, guerilla-style conflict. The Vietcong - the military branch of the National Liberation Front (NLF) - also used this style of combat. The NLF was only nominally independent of North Vietnam. Supplies to the Vietcong were provided via the Ho Chi Min trail from North Vietnam. Vietcong units were mostly uniformed soldiers. These soldiers were full-time combatants. They attacked their opponents over a wide area. Regional forces were also a part of the Vietcong. These units fought only in local areas. When the pressure from American units escalated, they were able to break down into smaller units and scatter. Local guerilla combatants had only a basic minimum of infantry training. Main force units

⁹ *The Encyclopedia of Military History*, 2nd ed., s.v. "The United States War in Vietnam."

¹⁰ *The Encyclopedia of Wars*, 1st ed., s.v. "Gulf of Tonkin Incident."

obtained longer training, including training for unit leaders, weapons and radio training. The basic hand weapon was the Chinese version of the Russian AK-47 submachine gun. Vietcong also used Russian and Chinese light and medium machine guns. These proved to be valuable against U.S. helicopters. RPG-7 (Russian rocket propelled grenades), proved to be valuable against armored vehicles and are in use throughout the world including Iraq.¹¹ Many bombs for bomb attacks were improvised, meaning, they were homemade. The Vietcong was not able to defeat American units in direct combat. Americans were attacked using ambushes and other guerilla like tactics inflicting casualties on the US daily.

The situation on the domestic American policy scene started to change. Opposition to the war grew from many sides, as the nation began to take a hard look at the United States' involvement in Vietnam. The credibility of the U.S. government suffered in 1971 when newspapers published "The Pentagon Papers". This top-secret historical study of Vietnam presented a pessimistic view of the likelihood of victory in Vietnam and generated criticism of U.S. policy.¹² Media access to combat portrayed the death and destruction created by the relentless bombing by U.S. forces. Many major literary and political figures began to speak out openly against keeping U.S. troops in Vietnam. Under public pressure, the American government made a decision to withdraw U.S. Forces from Vietnam in 1971. U.S. troops were, in fact, withdrawn in 1973. War in Vietnam ended in 1975. Guerilla operations achieved strategic success – the breakdown of Americans' will to continue in the war. The weaker opponent achieved success with

¹¹ George J. Mordica II, "Phase Four Operations in Iraq and the RPG-7", *Center for Army Lessons Learned*, (November-December 2003) available from http://d-n-i.net/fcs/iraq_and_the_RPG-7.htm; Internet; accessed 11 September 2006

¹² *The Encyclopedia of Wars*, 1st ed., s.v. "The Consequences of the War."

asymmetric operations against a more powerful American Military Forces. The success was important influenced by targeting to the public opinion in the USA.

More recently, there is an interesting operation of Allied Force in Yugoslavia. The multinational force was commissioned by NATO to bring a swift end to military actions between Serbia's military forces and Albanians in the southern province of Kosovo. The operation started on 24 March 1999 and continued for 78 days to 11 June 1999. Initial air operations were conducted at an altitude that was estimated to be safe considering the air defense threat that was expected. Controlled attacks were launched against the Serbian anti-aircraft defense system during Allied Force. NATO forces did not destroy all Serbian anti-aircraft devices. For this reason, NATO pilots had to maintain their higher altitudes for bombing¹³. This resulted in a reduction of bombing accuracy. The altitude of fifteen thousand feet was safe for pilots. NATO air forces did not achieve air superiority over Kosovo and Yugoslavia. However, some bombings did not hit their target. After allied planes bombed two refugee convoys on the same day near the Kosovo town of Djakovica, new tactics were implemented with pilots flying lower to better visually identify their targets. The net result was increased risk to allied pilots. According to official American sources only two aircraft were lost to hostile fire.¹⁴ From the operational point of view, it was confirmed that it is difficult to target scattered, camouflaged and mobile Yugoslavian army units. Serbian forces in Kosovo successfully employed camouflage, concealment, and deception extensively.¹⁵ Serbs used decoys to

¹³ William S. Cohen, *Kosovo/Operation Allied Force After-Action Report*, Report for US Congress (Washington D.C.: Department of Defense, 2000), xxi

¹⁴ Cohen, *Kosovo/Operation Allied Force*...., xxiii

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 61

create a variety of false targets.¹⁶ According to an evaluation paper from the US Army War College, NATO aircraft had been allowed to bomb below the self-imposed fifteen thousand-foot minimums; it is difficult to target small groups of men armed with automatic rifles.¹⁷ It was confirmed that the majority of Serbian army units in Kosovo were not destroyed. These units were withdrawn only after negotiations on armistice. This result was given by a study from the US Army War College that suggested the mission accomplishment could only have been completed with the commitment of ground forces.¹⁸ This evaluation was also confirmed in a Report to Congress:

“Overall, NATO’s recognition of the broad scale of Serbian denial and deception activities somewhat limited their success. However, because future adversaries are likely to study Serbian denial and deception tactics and could present more advanced threat to future operations, the Department is working on a variety of techniques to further improve our capability to counter an adversary’s use of camouflage, concealment, and deception.”¹⁹

Camouflage operations protected Serbian army units. However these operations were not able to change the outcome of the war. This can be considered as another example of the 20th Century asymmetric warfare. The Serbian army very successfully applied ruse, concealment, and deception.

These examples clearly indicate that asymmetric warfare already existed before this term was used at the end of 20th Century. One can identify some of these general elements, such as surprise of the opponent, use of low technology and low intensity of the

¹⁶ Ibid, 62

¹⁷ Earl H. Tilford, Jr., “Operation Allied Force and the Role of Air Power”, *US Army War College* (Quarterly – Winter 1999 – 2000) available from www.carlisle.army.mil/USA/WC/parameters/99winter/tilford.htm; Internet; accessed 19 September 2006

¹⁸ Earl H. Tilford, Jr., “Operation Allied Force and the Role of Air Power”, *US Army War College* (Quarterly – Winter 1999 – 2000) available from www.carlisle.army.mil/USA/WC/parameters/99winter/tilford.htm; Internet; accessed 19 September 2006

¹⁹ Cohen, *Kosovo/Operation Allied Force...*, 63

actions against a stronger belligerent side, aim to target public opinion which is able to change political decision and the application of ruse, concealment and deception.

4. Threat in 21st Century and the Slovak Armed Forces

According to the Defense Strategy of the Slovak Republic, military development is directed towards information and technological superiority of NATO countries. NATO is effectively able to use their own armed forces to combat the enemy. The enemy tries to eliminate this superiority. Potential NATO opponents apply asymmetric tactics and devices for alternative operational concepts including terrorist attacks, information operations or threat of using weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Nuclear, biological, chemical and, increasingly, radiological weapons are included in this term. WMD pose a serious risk to the populations, territory and forces of NATO member countries and to international security as a whole. Even before 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, the use or threatened use of WMD has been a concern of the Alliance.²⁰

Only seven countries are acknowledged to possess nuclear weapons. China, France, India, Pakistan, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America have tested nuclear weapons. One country suspected of having nuclear weapons is Israel. There are currently no known non-state actors who have WMD at their disposal, enough technical devices, theoretical knowledge and organization to develop and produce a nuclear weapon. However, there are limited numbers of countries, which are considered

²⁰ "Counter weapons of mass destruction," *NATO briefing*. (March 2005) available from <http://www.nato.int/docu/briefing/wmd/wmd-e.pdf>; Internet; accessed 19 September 2006

to have the potential to develop nuclear weapons in the future, such as Taiwan. North Korea claimed a successful nuclear test on 8 October 2006.²¹ Furthermore Iran has attempted to obtain radiological material for developing nuclear weapons.²²

Chemical weapons are considered to be the least dangerous type of WMD. Thus, it is easier to gain these weapons than nuclear weapons. Chemical weapons were used often throughout history, not only by countries, but by non-state actors as well. The sarin gas attack in Tokyo's metro in 1995 is well known. Several countries signed the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty; however, it is suspected that many countries have secret stockpiles of these weapons. Suspected countries are China, Egypt, Syria, Iran, and North Korea, and before Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq.²³ Each has the opportunity to threaten the use of chemical weapons in regional conflicts. Thus, their use or potential use can achieve strategic effects for a relatively low price. There are a number of potential delivery options ranging from ballistic and cruise missiles, aircraft, and terrorism. Chemical weapons offer the most asymmetric effect when employed as threats in regional conflicts.

Biological weapons should be the most dangerous threat for the 21st Century. As an example, consider the anthrax attacks in the USA in the fall of 2001. Letters containing anthrax were delivered to US politicians and media workers. A similar anthrax campaign is able to block all medical infrastructures. This means that a low purchase price of a biological weapon can potentially achieve strategic effects. Moreover, it is very difficult to identify the attacker beyond any doubt. For this reason, the biological weapons are

²¹ Paul Koring, "Sanctions proposal lack tough measures," *Globe and Mail*, 10 October 2006, 1.

²² Jane's Information Group. *Jane's Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Defence 2005-2006*, ed. John Eldridge (Coulson, Surrey, UK: Jane's Information Group, 2005), 14

²³ Jane's Information Group. *Jane's Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Defence 2005-2006*, ed. John Eldridge (Coulson, Surrey, UK: Jane's Information Group, 2005), 4 - 33

ideal asymmetric weapons. Unclassified US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) reports released in 2001 state that Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea and Syria were among countries suspected of possessing or seeking to possess offensive biological weapons.²⁴ The principal advantage of biological weapons is the potential employment without clear responsibility.

Information operations are products of modern society, which widely uses information technology. Personal computers, information nets and databases are not the only environment for information operations; there are several other devices for communication and media. Information itself is a strategic resource in today's national security environment. Modern society is built on civil or military information nets. In general, it can be assumed that there are two basic types of attack. The first type of attack can be aimed directly against the target - the information system itself. The attack is intended to destroy information systems disabling those that depend on it. For example, it could destroy military servers; preventing commanders' access to military protected Intranet systems. The second type of attack can use information technology as a tool to penetrate and exploit information systems, stealing and/or manipulating data. The attacks can be performed across computer nets. It means that it is possible to expect attacks on open and classified networks, either civilian or military. Classical examples are hacker attacks.

According to Canadian doctrine:

“Information operations can be used to influence decision-makers at all levels, from the head of state, to troops in contact on the front lines or general populace

²⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, “Unclassified Report to Congress on the Acquisition of Technology Relating to Weapons of Mass Destruction and Advanced Conventional Munitions,” https://www.cia.gov/cia/reports/721_reports/jan_jun2001.htm; Internet; accessed 29 September 2006

on either or both sides of a dispute. Information is the means; decision makers are the objective.”²⁵

One cannot forget about the electromagnetic threat. According to the American point of view:

“Perhaps the most dangerous and misunderstood form of information warfare attack is the high-altitude electromagnetic pulse threat: a combination of nuclear weapons and information warfare that can challenge the very heart of our operational doctrine and national stability.”²⁶

A country with the capability to deliver such an attack would possess a qualitatively higher order of deterrence than the one limited to regional attack.

Alternative operational concepts are another means to counter NATO military technological dominance. The probable approach is to seek advantage by operating well outside the moral framework of the traditional NATO standpoint. Opponents can simply ignore and operate outside of universal NATO norms of behavior. American military theorists are persuaded that a refusal to adopt NATO approaches may go beyond questions of operational convergence and military effectiveness.²⁷

The actual threat is terrorism. Terror can be a means chosen by a country or non-state actor. Non-state actors (terrorist groups) typically operate outside the framework of international relations. The contemporary classical example is Al-Qaeda. The common interpretation is that terrorists don't belong to any recognized armed forces or don't adhere to the laws of war and are, therefore, regarded as "rogue (corrupt/dishonest) actors"²⁸. The use of non-acceptable violence for the achievement of political ends is common for non-state groups. Attempts by some terrorist groups to obtain WMD are

²⁵ Canadian Forces College, “Information Operations Organization” (Advanced Military Studies Programme 9 Activity Package A/DS552/ENA/LE-3, 2006), 1/29.

²⁶ McKenzie, Jr., *The Revenge of the Melians: Asymmetric Threats* ..., 34

²⁷ McKenzie, Jr., *The Revenge of the Melians: Asymmetric Threat*....., 39

²⁸ *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th ed., s.v. “terrorism”

very dangerous. As was mentioned before in the examples of sarin attack in Tokyo and anthrax attacks in USA, it is a real threat.

These threats are described in “Doctrine of the Slovak Armed Forces.”²⁹ The Slovak Armed Forces’ basic mission is to defend the Slovak Republic against external threats. Considering the Slovak national economic potential and planned operational capabilities of the Slovak Armed Forces, when implementing this mission, it is necessary to take advantage of the Slovak membership in NATO, especially Article 3 and 5, of the North-Atlantic Treaty. Article 3 and Article 5 guarantee collective capabilities for collective defense.³⁰ Therefore, the Slovak Republic has to develop forces that are able to participate in conflicts or crisis resolutions abroad. The Slovak Armed Forces must be ready to meet commitments agreed upon between the Slovak Republic and NATO, and eventually be ready for further international contractual obligations of the Slovak Republic concerning collective defense against future aggressions.³¹ The Slovak Armed Forces shall further fulfill tasks relating to international obligations of the Slovak Republic and to protect national security interests abroad, especially in the context of development of the security environment and management of crisis threatening stability of this environment. For this purpose, components of the Slovak Armed forces shall be deployed in international peace operations led by the UN, NATO, and EU, or ad hoc established international coalitions. These can be established as peace enforcement operations, peace support or peace maintenance operations. Components of the Slovak Armed Forces can be deployed either independently or under the leadership of

²⁹ The General Staff of the Slovak Armed Forces. *Doctrine of the Slovak Armed Forces*, (Bratislava: 2005), 12.

³⁰ National Council of the Slovak Republic. *Defense strategy of The Slovak Republic*, (Bratislava: 2005), 3

³¹ The General Staff of the Slovak Armed Forces. *Doctrine of the Slovak Armed Forces*, (Bratislava: 2005), 16

international organizations to fulfill missions of rescue or humanitarian operations abroad. Slovak Republic political authority and military capabilities will define limitations of the Slovak Armed Forces engagement in operations. There is no anticipation of any military action in the region of Central Europe over the next 10 – 15 years. The political situation is stable. Therefore, it is expected that the Slovak Armed Forces will be used in domestic operations only and in support of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic in non – military operations. These actions include assistance to civil authorities during flooding, mass migration, maintaining public order, a large terrorist attack, and “Release other than attack”. The last term means the deliberate or unintended creation of a nuclear, radiological, biological or chemical environment by any means other than the employment of NBC weapons authorized for use by a nation state.³² It is suggested that Slovak Republic units and commanders will be required to deal with asymmetric attacks during their missions abroad. Therefore, it is necessary to prepare every soldier and commander at all levels for asymmetric combat.

In 2004, the Slovak Armed Forces adopted NATO’s doctrines for planning and conducting operations. During the last two years, Slovakia had many opportunities to train the General Staff, Land Forces HQ and Air Forces HQ levels on the NATO planning process. The Slovak Armed Forces performed an exercise with an ad hoc Joint Forces operational HQ. Their experiences demonstrated that they have to develop practical skills and habits, especially when responding to an unusual threat or situation in CBRN defense and defense against terrorism. Since May 2006, the Slovak Armed

³² NATO Standardization Agency, *NATO Glossary of NBC Terms and Definitions (AAP-21), English and French*. Brussels: (Brussels: NATO Standardization Agency, 2004), 1-37

Forces have the Operational Doctrine for CBRN Defense in the Slovak Armed Forces. However, most of the officers are still thinking that CBRN defense is a task strictly for CBRN specialists. Slovak CBRN doctrine describes all solutions for providing CBRN Defense at the operational level of conflict. The Slovak Armed Forces do not have the doctrine dealing with defense against terrorism. It is necessary to develop standard operating procedures for special units, which would be used against a terrorist threat. For CBRN defense, it is necessary to develop tactical level doctrine immediately following ratification by NATO CBRN doctrine for tactical level – AJP-8.3.1. The Slovak Armed Forces have yet to develop appropriate doctrine concerning Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD). This doctrine should be prepared at the National Centre of Excellence, which will be established in January 2007 in Nováky. This centre should participate in the area of Improvised Ordnance Disposal (IOD) as well.

Therefore, the following recommendations are proposed for the Slovak Armed Forces:

- 1.) Develop appropriate doctrine for CBRN defense, EOD, IOD. The guarantor for this process shall be J3 of the General Staff. This doctrine development work must be coordinated with sections for doctrine on the Land Forces HQ and HQ for Training and Support.
- 2.) During professional military training (PMT), train commanders at the operational level during field exercises and also at the Military Academy in Liptovský Mikuláš. The Slovak Armed Forces must take better advantage of Simulations Centers for live simulations. The emphasis should be on countering emerging asymmetric threats the Slovak Republic will likely face.

- 3.) During PMT, train junior officers and NCOs in all types of training and education in Military College in Liptovský Mikuláš and NCO Academy in Martin. For this training, the Slovak Armed Forces must draw upon the experiences from the U.S. Army, U.S. Air Forces. U.S. Marine Corps and other NATO Armed Forces. It is not necessary to develop anything new. New environment for commanders is very well described for example, in the paper from General Charles C. Krulak: “The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three-Block War.”³³
- 4.) On the tactical level, it is necessary to develop specific capabilities. The Slovak Armed Forces should adopt EOD teams into engineering units. The Slovak Armed Forces are preparing these teams as independent teams for expeditionary tasks. A small force like the Slovak Armed Forces, has very limited personnel resources. Since this job is considered a “dead end” job (no opportunity for advancement or promotion) – the model of career advancement does not apply in this environment. In this case it would be advantageous to be able to remain in this career for closer to ten to fifteen years. According to the treaty between the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic, the Slovak Armed Forces have tasks to fill various missions and cooperate with Civilian Defense. The General Staff and operational level currently perform these tasks. It is necessary to perform a joint exercise between military units and teams of civilian defense. A good example is the international exercise EU EUDREX 2005 in Austria.

³³ Canadian Forces College, “The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three-Block War” (Advanced Military Studies Programme 9 Activity Package A/DS552/WTH/LD-4, 2006), 14 - 17

5. Conclusion

Asymmetric warfare is not new. It has been in existence for a considerable period of time. It was demonstrated through three historical examples, how important it is to be ready for unusual weapons or tactics. The only new thing is the practice, for example how to use devices such as improvised explosive devices, threat of using biological and toxic agents. It was shown in the historical examples that following elements are characteristic for asymmetric style of combat: surprise; use of low technology and low intensity of actions against strong opponent; irregular approach; targeting public opinion; application of ruse, concealment and deception.

The first step in preparing the Slovak Armed Forces to better meet tomorrow's challenges is to learn from the past. Military commanders should study history. Modern, technologically sophisticated warfare, with the asymmetric threats, makes this requirement more relevant. The military task for today is to train units and commanders at all levels to provide adequate protection against asymmetric threats. The Slovak Armed Forces should not limit its thinking about asymmetric warfare without practical training and education of every member of the Slovak Armed Forces. It is necessary to provide appropriate training according to new experiences.

The Slovak Armed Forces have to consider all factors, which were evaluated from recent conflicts, and incorporate lessons learned into the training process of the Slovak Armed Forces. General Staff of the Slovak Armed Forces, especially J3, must concentrate their focus on the best training of Slovak military units before deployment to foreign missions.

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