UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

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ABSTRACT

UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR, by MAJ Jeremy B. Miller, 61 pages.

Considering the history of unconventional warfare in the United States, and specifically, during the Civil War, it begs the question: Did the Confederacy's strategy to engage in unconventional warfare significantly contribute to its conventional strategy? Two assertions remain most accepted by historians and military personnel. The first prevailing opinion is that the Confederacy's use of unconventional warfare was ineffective and negatively affected the overall campaign. The second opinion is that the South's unconventional efforts yielded unparalleled success and prolonged the war.
To evaluate the impact of the Confederacy's unconventional campaign plan, the methodology of this study addresses several subordinate questions: Did the Confederacy adopt an unconventional war strategy as part of its overall strategy? How did conventional military leaders apply unconventional warfare? What effects did unconventional warfare have on conventional operations? Was unconventional warfare at the tactical level linked to operational and strategic level objectives?

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Unconventional warfare existed since man first engaged in armed conflict, even from Biblical times to the present. The United States is no exception. During the Revolutionary War, unconventional warriors like the minutemen and other patriots utilized guerrilla tactics to aid conventional commanders and thus ultimately gain the nation's freedom. Furthermore, unconventional tactics were used in the period between the Revolutionary War and the American Civil War, as seen on the Western frontier and in the Mexican War. During the American Civil War, new levels of unconventional warfare surfaced and proved both controversial and intriguing.

Considering the history of unconventional warfare in the United States, and specifically, during the Civil War, it begs the question: Did the Confederacy's strategy to engage in unconventional warfare significantly contribute to its conventional strategy?

The Confederacy's adoption of unconventional warfare in the American Civil War was a relatively inexpensive means to support the conventional strategy and had significant effects on the Confederate conventional war effort at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. To evaluate the impact of the Confederacy's unconventional campaign plan, the methodology of this research must address several subordinate questions: Did the Confederacy adopt an unconventional war strategy as part of their overall strategy? How did conventional military leaders apply unconventional warfare? What effects did unconventional warfare have on conventional operations? Was unconventional warfare at the tactical level linked to operational and strategic level objectives?

Accordingly, this thesis studies the South's campaign plan to determine where and when unconventional warfare thrived. Then, using current United States Army doctrine and well-known unconventional warfare experts as a model, this examination assesses the effectiveness of the applied unconventional techniques. Next, the research looks at strategic and operational and tactical objectives and their linkage. Finally, this examination demonstrates the pertinence of the research to today's military leader.

Military historians dispute whether the Confederacy formally adopted an unconventional campaign tied to a conventional campaign; but if one looks across the Civil War spectrum, the eastern theater demonstrated a clear connection between the two modes of warfare.

Early in the Civil War, Confederate leadership refused to accept the implementation of unconventional warfare. Why this reluctance? First, the South's President Jefferson Davis, Secretary of War Leroy Walker, and General Robert E. Lee were professionally trained and educated people. Their military upbringings went against such types of warfare. They believed that guerrilla warfare was a dishonorable way of waging war. Second, the Confederate leaders believed decentralized operations occasioned deviant behavior, promotive of criminal activities (Wert 1990, 70).

Despite these prior views, circumstances forced the Confederate leadership to accept unconventional warfare because of its proven successes; moreover, this shift in strategy owed to the Confederacy's limited combat forces and resources. More to the point, the noteworthy successes of units like Mosby's and McNeill's Rangers demonstrated that irregular warfare made huge contributions to achieving overall objectives. Finally, because the South suffered great deficits in the number of

conventional formations, they realized that guerrilla warfare reduced force requirements and attained remarkable military effects (Wert 1990, 70).

Clearly, the Confederacy eventually officially adopted unconventional warfare. The Confederate Congress, in April 1862, implemented the Ranger Partisan Act which authorized the establishment of partisan units under the command of conventional commanders. "This act, declared that the irregular forces were equal to troops in regular armies of the Confederacy and were subject to the Articles of War and Army Regulations" (Wert 1990, 70-1). On 28 April 1862, the War Department, Adjutant and Inspectors General's Office issued General Order Number 30, officially publishing for the Confederate Army the authority to establish Partisan Rangers. The following excerpt from this order outlines the guidelines for Confederate military leaders:

> Section 1. The Congress of the Confederate States of America do enact, That the President be, and he is hereby, authorized to commission such officers as he may deem proper with authority to form the bands of partisan rangers, in companies, battalions, or regiments, either as infantry or cavalry, the companies, battalions or regiments to be composed of such numbers as the President may approve.
>
> Section 2. Be it further enacted, that such partisan rangers, after being regularly received into service, shall be entitled to the same pay, rations and quarters during their term of service, and be subject to the same regulations as other soldiers. (Official Records, Series IV, Vol. I, 1094-5)

Additionally, these acts stipulated that unconventional commanders report to and be subject to the orders of conventional commanders. This legislation patently expressed the leadership's reversal of opinion towards unconventional warfare and underscored their desire to control the actions taken by irregular units.

The Confederacy's development of legislation and military regulations to incorporate unconventional units into the regular army afforded a bridge and defined relationships between the conventional and unconventional commands.

Satisfactory analysis of this research problem requires several key assumptions. First, the terms unconventional warfare and guerrilla warfare are used interchangeably. This is necessary because terminology among historians and within military doctrines has significantly evolved over the last 137 years. Since the term unconventional warfare did not emerge until the 1990s, early literary works refer only to guerrilla warfare. The second necessary assumption is the delineation of the levels of war as applied to the Confederate Army. For example, in the Eastern Theater, one must assume that the Confederate Army, the Army of Northern Virginia, and the 43rd Battalion Virginia Cavalry operated at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels respectively. Such instances are imperative in determining the nexus of mission and effects at each level of war.

This thesis uses the following key terms from Field Manual 101-5-1, *Operational Terms and Graphics* (1997), to answer the aforementioned questions:

Battles: "A series of related tactical engagements that last longer than an engagement, involve larger forces, and could affect the course of the campaign. They occur when division, corps, or army commanders fight for significant objectives" (1-17).

Campaign: "A series of related military operations aimed at accomplishing a strategic or operational objective within a given time and space" (1-23).

Engagements: "A small tactical conflict, usually between opposing maneuver forces" (1-60).

Guerrilla Warfare: (1) "Military and paramilitary operations conducted in enemy-held or hostile territory by irregular, predominately indigenous forces" (1-75). (2) "Fighting by groups of irregular troops (guerrillas) within areas occupied by the enemy.

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When guerrillas obey the laws of conventional warfare they are entitled, if captured, to be treated as ordinary prisoners of war; however, they are often executed by their captors. The tactics of guerrilla warfare stress deception and ambush, as opposed to mass confrontation, and succeed best in an irregular, rugged, terrain and with a sympathetic populace, whom guerrillas often seek to win over by propaganda, reform, and terrorism" (*The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th ed., 2001).

Military Strategy: "The art and science of employing the armed forces of a nation to secure objectives of national policy by the application of force or the threat of force" (1-101).

Operational Level of War: "The level of war at which campaigns and major operations are planned, conducted, and sustained to accomplish strategic objectives within theaters or areas of operations. Activities at this level link tactics and strategy by establishing operational objectives needed to accomplish the strategic objectives, sequencing events to achieve the operational objectives, initiating actions, and applying resources to bring about and sustain these events. These events imply a broader dimension of time or space than do tactics; they ensure the logistic and administrative support of tactical forces, and provide the means by which tactical successes are exploited to achieve strategic objectives" (1-115).

Paramilitary Forces: "Forces or groups which are distinct from the regular armed forces of any country, but resembling them in organization, equipment, training, or mission" (1-118).

Sabotage: "An act or acts with intent to injure, interfere with, or obstruct the national defense of a country by willfully injuring or destroying, or attempting to injure

or destroy, any national defense or war material, premises, or utilities, to include human and natural resources" (1-136).

Strategic Level of War: "The level of war at which a nation, often as a member of a group of nations, determines national or multinational strategic level security objectives and guidance, and develops and uses national resources to accomplish these objectives. Activities at this level establish national and multinational military objectives; sequence initiatives; define limits and assess risks for the use of military and other instruments of national power; develop global plans or theater plans to achieve these objectives; and provides military forces and other capabilities in accordance with strategic plans" (1-145).

Tactical Level of War: "The level at which battles and engagements are planned and executed to accomplish military objectives assigned to tactical units or task forces. Activities at this level focus on the ordered arrangement and maneuver of combat elements in relation to each other and to the enemy to achieve combat objectives" (1-150).

Terrorism: "The calculated use of violence or threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological" (1-154).

Unconventional Warfare: "A broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations normally of long duration, predominately conducted by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes guerrilla warfare and other direct offensive, low

visibility, covert, or clandestine operations, as well as the indirect activities of subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, and evasion and escape" (1-158).

The only limitation encountered in answering the research question was time and limited primary sources. Because of the large volume of historical documents, histories, and other relevant information, investigating the most complete and pertinent literary works is mandatory. On the other hand, since so much time has elapsed since the Civil War, and limited primary accounts exist relating to the topic, most available sources are secondary. Still, remaining focused on data germane to the problem and maximizing accessible primary sources was critical to meeting research requirements.

The importance of restricting the research to relevant campaigns, battles, and engagements cannot be over emphasized. This research does not summarize all military actions during the Civil War. The study focuses on conflicts that encompassed both conventional and unconventional warfare. Specifically, this research highlights in detail several important campaigns and by applying the examination model, extracts significant relationships between conventional and unconventional units at all levels of war and assesses how guerrilla units executed their strategy and what effects this strategy had on the Southern overall strategy.

Limiting the examination to pertinent battles and engagements also entails limiting the study of particular units or types of organizations that conducted unconventional warfare. Many groups or organizations used guerrilla tactics throughout the Civil War. These groups included conventional forces, officially sanctioned guerrilla units, thieves, and bandits. For example, conventional cavalry units were utilized to conduct reconnaissance and raid missions against the extended Northern supply lines.

"The logistical importance of the railroad also enhanced the cavalry's role as a raiding force deep in the enemy's rear" (McPherson 1982, 191). Although conventional units and other organizations used guerrilla tactics, this study focuses on the officially sanctioned Ranger Partisan units established by the Confederate government under the provisions of the April 1862 Ranger Partisan Act.

In subsequent chapters this essay examines these issues in detail. Chapter 2 investigates the histories and previous works in the field and demonstrates their contributions to this research. Chapter 3 examines the uses and effects of unconventional warfare on the Confederacy's conventional campaigns as applied to United States Army Doctrine. Chapter 4 presents the interpretation and analysis of the South's unconventional warfare influence. Finally, chapter 5 explores the significance of this study to today.

To a contemporary military leader, this research question may seem irrelevant. What relevance could a war fought so long ago, with different doctrine, and lesser technologies have today? Relevancy is the key essential. Military leaders must extract the lessons learned in that time and apply them to contemporary operations. Additionally, if one defines today's operating environment, operations demand the incorporation of conventional and unconventional warfare. If one reviews recent hostilities, it establishes the need for contemporary leaders to understand the relationships between conventional and unconventional warfare. Moreover, evaluating Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, military leaders emphasized the importance of understanding and integrating unconventional units into campaign plans to achieve operational objectives. This examination of unconventional operations in the Civil War continues to be of value on today's battlefield.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

A cursory review of the literary works discussing the Confederacy's use of conventional and unconventional warfare quickly overwhelms the most inquisitive researcher. A more in-depth investigation, however, reveals interesting perspectives and conclusions that have contemporary relevancy.

Many renowned historians, after research, defended their conclusions of the importance of unconventional warfare during the Civil War. Though few histories have comprehensively analyzed unconventional warfare, many briefly address it as supporting material or provide details of irregular warfare as a sidebar to other thoughts. However, these assertions have evolved remarkably over the past fifty years. Through it all, two assertions remain most accepted by historians and military personnel. The first prevailing opinion is that the Confederacy's use of unconventional warfare was ineffective and negatively affected the overall campaign. The second opinion is that the South's unconventional efforts yielded unparalleled success and prolonged the war.

First, the assertion that the Confederacy's use of unconventional warfare was ineffective and negatively affected the overall campaign has been the least popular view. In 1941, a dissertation at the University of Texas by Ethelbert C. Barksdale, "Semi-Regular and Irregular Warfare in the Civil War," addressed unconventional warfare. Barksdale made the point that the guerrillas and irregulars were undisciplined, unreliable, and did not positively influence strategic and operational goals. His final conclusion-- these guerrillas ultimately hindered the Confederacy's overall campaign. Unfortunately,

Barksdale fell into the pattern of most writers--namely, focusing primarily on revered leaders and not connecting conventional and unconventional relationships.

Appearing in 1955, one of the first noteworthy works was Jay Monaghan's *Civil War on the Western Border, 1854-1865*. Monaghan focuses on irregular events conducted primarily in the Western Theater. Describing actions predominately in Missouri, Monaghan could not move away from focusing on the romantic leaders of the guerrilla forces to providing insight to the linkage between unconventional and conventional efforts as they related to the South's overall strategy.

Robert L. Kerby, a professor at the University of Notre Dame, authored *Why the Confederacy Lost* (1972). In his book, Kerby writes chiefly about the trans-Mississippi Confederacy and argues that the Confederacy's political and military leaders failed to recognize that they were already engaged in guerrilla warfare, despite successes on the battlefield. Additionally, Kerby suggests that the Confederacy's failure to wage a completely unconventional warfare was a major contributor to their losing the war.

Of the historians who believe that the Confederacy's unconventional warfare efforts were unproductive and failed to enhance their strategy, Barksdale, Monaghan, and Kerby make the strongest argument.

The second opinion is that the South's unconventional efforts yielded unparalleled success and prolonged the war. Colonel Joseph P. Kutger contributed an article in a special 1960 issue of *Military Affairs*, titled "Irregular Warfare in Transition." Colonel Kutger's premise is that both prevailing arguments, as to the overall success of the unconventional war, had been overstated. Additionally, he contends that unconventional warfare did have a substantial impact and merits further historical review.

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In 1990, Jeffry D. Wert authored *Mosbys Rangers, The True Adventure of the Most Famous Command of the Civil War.* Wert provides dramatic accounts of Colonel Mosby and the 43rd Battalion of Virginia Cavalry operating chiefly in the Shenandoah Valley. Wert tells his readers about numerous unconventional operations conducted by Mosby and his men. Additionally, this work largely focuses on the organization and personnel which operated under Mosby's command. However, Wert does briefly address relationships between conventional and unconventional commanders. For example: "while conducting operations in July 1864, Colonel Mosby conducted liaison and requested orders from Lieutenant General Jubal Early, commander of conventional forces operating in the Shenandoah" (Wert 1990, 181-3). Wert contends that Mosby offered his unit's support to facilitate Early's operations, but the conventional commander never complied. Furthermore, Wert asserts that Mosby carried on unconventional efforts to support Early, but of his own accord.

Another compelling work is *Guerrilla Warfare: Analysis and Predictions* (1972) by N.I. Klonis. This study brilliantly describes the influence of the Confederacy's unconventional efforts across the Civil War spectrum. His illustrations include methods utilized to carry out guerrilla operations and specific effects imposed on Union forces. He clearly spells out the effectiveness of unconventional warfare and the substantial Union forces repositioned from frontline positions to prevent guerrillas from influencing lines of communication. Thus, Klonis concludes that "the direct result of this activity was that Federal troops in Northern Virginia were obliged to divert substantial units to escort their supply columns and guard their installations in addition to detailing several cavalry units to actively search for and pursue the guerrillas" (Klonis 1972, 19-20).

James M. McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom* acknowledges the successes of the Confederacy's unconventional campaign. McPherson states that Confederate guerrillas "tied down large numbers of Union troops in the border states" (McPherson 1988, 307). Also, unconventional operations in Missouri "tied down tens of thousands of Union soldiers and militia who might otherwise have fought elsewhere" (McPherson 1988, 784).

Civil War History magazine's March 2000 issue featured the work of Daniel E. Sutherland, "Sideshow No Longer: A Historiographical Review of the Guerrilla War." Sutherland summarizes the key literary contributions in the field and thoroughly and succinctly reviews relevant historical arguments and viewpoints held by historians past and present. Sutherland's contribution to the research of unconventional warfare is noteworthy. Specifically, his delineation of the groups who performed guerrilla activities is extremely relevant and addresses issues not previously discussed. Case in point, Sutherland states "The distinction between guerrillas and partisans is useful--indeed, essential--at a certain level of inquiry, for it does define two different styles of irregular operations" (Sutherland 1995, 5). The article broke new ground by highlighting this issue, but does not explain the difference between these unconventional groups. Sutherland concludes that much headway has been made in the research of guerrilla warfare, but insists that much work remains.

Sutherland's *Season of War: The Ordeal of a Confederate Community, 1861-1865*, also provided great insights into the methods of employment and the effects of guerrilla warfare during the Civil War. This book's focal point is Culpeper County, Virginia, a strategic location throughout the Civil War. Sutherland provides accounts

from the initial Northern Army occupation, to its recapture by the Confederacy, through the final Northern victory. Pertinent to this examination, Sutherland discusses unconventional units and activities and how they affected Union military leaders' decisions during combat. Sutherland provides one enlightening example,

> I do not think it safe to patrol to Hazel River with less than 20 to 30 men, the lieutenant of one picket force advises his brigade commander, and shall not send a patrol unless you direct. Generals also recognized the danger. Earlier this month, Wesley Merritt acknowledged that only sizable reconnaissance forces can feel safe from attack and capture by guerrillas in this region. (Sutherland 1995, 340)

Sutherland argues forcefully that Confederate guerrilla forces impacted on Union military leaders' decisions from the tactical level to the operational level of war.

Another interesting work is Stephen V. Ash's *Middle Tennessee Transformed, 1860-1870, War and Peace in the Upper South.* Ash writes about the effects of the Civil War on the society of Middle Tennessee. Although this book is not focused on guerrilla warfare per se, it brings to light several important ideas regarding unconventional warfare. More to the point, Ash cites the effects of guerrillas on the local population. Most significantly, Ash explains that citizens in small towns and throughout the countryside who may have been Federal sympathizers or loyalists were hesitant to aid or cooperate with Union forces because of what local guerrilla bands might do to them. Ash wrote "such brutal violence or the threat of it generally achieved its purpose, sending fearful unionists into hiding or exile" (Ash 1988, 149). He further elaborates on how this hindered the Union's attempt to maintain order and re-establish basic civic functions in these rural areas. Ash concludes that because of guerrilla unit actions in Middle Tennessee, Federal leaders were unable to establish complete control of occupied states and impose their will on local populations.

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Michael Fellman's *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri during the American Civil War"* appreciably contributed to this investigation even though it focuses on the Western theater. Fellman writes about the state of Missouri and centers his attention on the unconventional warfare aspect of the war. Also, he makes several interesting points as to how leaders on both sides viewed and waged guerrilla warfare. Most importantly, Fellman's view on how the South's political and military leaders viewed irregular warfare is insightful. Fellman emphasizes that Southern leaders viewed guerrillas as dishonorable and inefficient, but often a useful tool of war. He explains that although the Confederates could not stop the rise and actions of guerrilla bands; they tolerated their existence and attempted to control them through legislation. He further contends that the introduction of the 1862 Partisan Ranger Act and its eventual abolishment in 1864 was the direct result of Southern military leaders' inability to accept an unconventional approach to fighting the war. Tied to this line of thought, Fellman differentiates between the types of guerrilla units and how they were viewed by leaders. He states that Confederate Generals viewed most irregular units as disgraceful except for Partisan Ranger leaders like Colonel Mosby. Case in point, in a letter from Brigadier General Thomas L. Rosser, commander in the Shenandoah Valley, to General Robert E. Lee, Rosser wrote that with the exception of Mosby, "these irregular fighters were a nuisance and an evil to the service, ought to be disbanded, and the men placed in the regular ranks" (Fellman 1989, 99). This insight sheds light on different aspects to the how and why irregular forces were employed during the Civil War.

Another significant contribution to unconventional warfare research is *The McNeill Rangers: A Study in Confederate Guerrilla Warfare* by Simeon Miller Bright. In

this 1951 work, Bright focuses exclusively on Captain John Hanson McNeill and the McNeill Rangers' operations in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia. Bright writes in great detail about the successes and effects of McNeill's actions to support the Confederacy's conventional strategy. This work substantiates the position held by some historians that the Confederacy knowingly engaged in unconventional warfare. For example, Bright writes "the McNeill Rangers were organized by John Hanson McNeill under the authority of an act passed by the Confederate Congress at Richmond. This act allowed companies to be organized as Partisan Rangers which were to cooperate with the armies of the Confederacy, but would be independent in command" (Bright 1951, 343). Also, Bright's work strengthens the idea that Southern leadership consciously integrated conventional and unconventional efforts. Analyzing actions in 1863, at Moorefield and Petersburg, Bright portrays a direct link between McNeill's Rangers and conventional forces commanded by Brigadier General W. E. Jones. Furthermore, Bright discusses the significant impact McNeill's Rangers had on the success of Jones' army. Bright also describes the commendations McNeill received from General Robert E. Lee. Such examples show that at the highest levels of the Confederate Army, unconventional warfare was supported, resourced, and employed to succeed in battle.

Gabor S. Boritt's 1992 collection of essays, *Why the Confederacy Lost*, includes works from Civil War experts James M. McPherson, Archer Jones, Gary W. Gallagher, Reid Mitchell, and Joseph T. Glatthaar. These enlightening essays provide specific examples of the Confederacy's unconventional successes. One sample is Archer Jones' essay *Military Means, Political Ends: Strategy*. In his essay, Jones illustrates the impact of Confederacy guerrillas on the Federal's ability to execute their military strategy. Jones

writes "Grant and his friend and collaborator William T. Sherman knew the difficulties of implementing Union strategy, because in taking Vicksburg they had faced a Confederate general who had equal numbers. Although Grant had twice as many men as the Confederates, he had committed half to holding West Tennessee and northern Mississippi and protecting their railroads from guerrilla and cavalry raids" (Boritt 1992, 69-70). In addition, Jones contends the Confederacy's successful use of guerrilla tactics forced the Union to adopt similar tactics. Conversely, Reid Mitchell's essay *The Perseverance of the Soldiers* briefly speaks to the unconventional aspect of the war. Mitchell asserts that the Confederacy chose to engage in conventional warfare and refused to fight an unconventional war. His narrow definition of unconventional warfare precludes discussion and consideration that the Confederacy may have simultaneously knowingly engaged in both. In short, this literary contribution provides additional insight to the strategic and operational effects of the Confederacy's unconventional campaign.

Thought provoking, the 1970 *Spies of the Confederacy* by John Bakeless, brings to light an interesting perspective of how the Confederate guerrillas aided the war effort. Bakeless addresses the role guerrillas played in gathering vital information for military purposes. Highlighting this valuable contribution, Bakeless discusses several examples of guerrilla reconnaissance and information gathering that aided conventional commanders.

Two primary sources that greatly contributed to this study were *Gray Ghost, the Memoirs of Colonel John S. Mosby* and *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. Both contribute first-hand accounts of critical events surrounding the employment of unconventional warfare.

War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies provides numerous reports, correspondences, and unit records of events. These records assist in demonstrating the relationships between conventional and unconventional units and illustrate the impacts of the guerrillas on both enemy and friendly forces. In addition, The Official Records describes the emotions that Union and Confederate leaders shared in dealing with unconventional warfare from their perspectives. Official documents allow this study to clearly confirm assertions based on historical fact.

The other primary source used that provides further insight to the connections and impacts of conventional and unconventional warfare in the Confederacy's Eastern Theater is *Gray Ghost, the Memoirs of Colonel John S. Mosby* edited by Charles Wells Russell. In this book, the reader receives first hand accounts of Mosby's Rangers in action. These me moirs clearly establish an association between conventional and unconventional warfare. Mosby's accounts outline linkage between specific engagements and operational objectives; Russell's contribution provides substantial credibility to this position.

Chapter 3, "Research Methodology," examines several additional sources used in this study. Works from prominent experts in guerrilla warfare and current military doctrine are discussed in detail and donate relevant information to this analysis.

In summary, historians and military personnel predominately accept one of the two conflicting positions. The first, representing the minority position, is that the Confederacy's use of unconventional warfare was ineffective and negatively affected the

overall campaign. The second position is that the South's unconventional efforts yielded unparalleled successes and prolonged the war.

Analyzing the previous examinations of unconventional warfare, most of these studies concentrated narrowly on operations at the tactical level, while failing to consider the unconventional successes in light of the overall strategy. This investigation will highlight the important distinctions in command and control in the Eastern Theater.

A common limitation of the literature was the tendency to focus on the leaders and legendary figures. Many studies have already demonstrated the character and tendencies of these heralded leaders. This examination will not address specific leaders unless relevant to command and control relationships. By avoiding personalities, this study can better focus on the research problem.

Unconventional and conventional relationships have been briefly addressed in some of these studies. However, a more detailed investigation into the relationships between Confederate unconventional and conventional forces and the effects of combining these types of warfare remains necessary. This examination fills this void in Civil War historiography. Scholarship obliges that this analysis be conducted to ascertain the true impact and employment of the Confederacy's guerrillas. Future conflicts demand that military leaders know its relevancy.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Important to this investigation is developing an assessment model to understand the impact of the Confederacy's unconventional warfare to the overall military strategy. Examining the insights of historians and military theorists revealed a diverse collection of unconventional warfare fundamentals and characteristics. Several notable theorists clearly emerge to the forefront. Additionally, United States Army doctrine outlines essential elements of unconventional warfare that remain the foundation for modern special operations. The research model used in this assessment considers the merit of these resources and various other models. The logical choice of a model to assess the South's guerrilla effort is one that adopts the common characteristics of both renowned theorists and today's military doctrine.

A discussion of the contributors and their judgments is necessary prior to detailing the assessment model. Five primary sources contribute to this model: Che Guevara's *General Principles of Guerrilla Warfare* provided valuable insight into the essence, tactics, and strategy of guerrilla warfare; Mao Tse-tung's *On Guerrilla Warfare* contributed aspects of conventional and unconventional relationships, sustaining, and equipping unconventional units; *Counter-guerrilla Operations* (1986); *Special Forces Unconventional Operations* (2003); and *Special Forces Operations* (2001) reveals typical aims and goals of guerrillas. These sources shared common elements which when combined, ultimately allows this investigation to establish and apply a comprehensive

assessment model to determine the merits of the Confederacy's unconventional contributions to the overall strategy.

The first primary source, Che Guevara's *General Principles of Guerrilla Warfare* provided valuable insight into the essence, tactics, and strategy of guerrilla warfare. Ernesto Guevara, known as Che Guevara, was a Latin American guerrilla leader and revolutionary theorist who became famous for his role in Fidel Castro's guerrilla war against Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista in the late 1950s and later served as Cuba's minister of industry (1961-1965). Che Guevara wrote two books on guerrilla warfare and strongly advocated revolutionary activities against the governments of developing countries. In his *Guerrilla Warfare,* Guevara outlines six principles, three of which apply to this assessment model. One of these principles is the essence of guerrilla warfare. Guevara states that the guerrilla fighter requires help from local populations, knowledge of the terrain, and the understanding of guerrilla tactics. Another of these principles is that guerrilla warfare demands a specific strategy defined as "the analysis of the objectives to be achieved in the light of the total military situation and the overall ways of reaching these objectives" (Guevara 1961, 10). He further defines guerrilla strategy as determining ways to achieve desired objectives while preserving the guerrilla force.

In addition to the essence and strategy of guerrilla forces, the third principle Guevara wrote about is specific tactics that characterize guerrilla warfare. Guevara defined guerrilla tactics as "the practical methods of achieving the grand strategic objectives" (Guevara 1961, 15). He described the imperatives of tactics as mobility, night operations, flexibility, sabotage, and treatment of local populations. He discusses the guerrilla's ability to rapidly adapt to battlefield conditions and adjust his tactics as

situations develop, resulting in retaining the initiative and the element of surprise against conventional forces. Additionally, Guevara makes the distinction between sabotage and terrorism. He emphasized that sabotage is focused on accomplishing military objectives while terrorism is ineffective and negatively affects innocent people.

Combining guerrilla strategy and tactics, Guevara wrote about the types of missions and characterized usual unconventional targets. He stated, "One of the weakest points of the enemy is transportation by road and railroad. It is virtually impossible to maintain a vigil yard by yard over a transport line, a road, or railroad" (Guevara 1961, 15). Moreover, he explained that lines of communication and the enemy's logistical support systems are the typical targets for guerrilla operations and are effective in disrupting conventional operations and inflicting substantial enemy casualties.

The second primary source for the assessment model is Mao Tse-tung's *On Guerrilla Warfare* that addressed aspects of conventional and unconventional relationships, sustainment, and equipping unconventional units. Mao Tse-tung, born in Hunan province on 26 December 1893, is well known for his views and personal successes leading guerrilla actions in China. Mao was a founding member of the Chinese Communist Party and quickly began to develop his theory of the revolutionary potential of the peasantry. In 1927, following the bloody communist fallout with Nationalist Chiang Kai-shek, Mao began to put into practice his ideas about a revolution by way of a guerrilla war against the government. In 1945, the Chinese Civil War resumed and Mao and his movement were able to use their rural foundation to outmaneuver and eventually overwhelm the Nationalists. Mao proclaimed the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949.

Mao's *On Guerrilla Warfare* highlights several key concepts about unconventional warfare that have remained relevant throughout history. He wrote about conventional and unconventional relationships and contended that guerrilla operations are not an independent form of warfare, but that it is only one part of war. Specifically, Mao wrote "We consider guerrilla operations as but one aspect of our total or mass war because they, lacking the quality of independence, are of themselves incapable of providing a solution to the struggle" (Mao 1937, 1). Furthermore, Mao describes guerrilla warfare as "a weapon that a nation inferior in arms and military equipment may employ against a more powerful aggressor nation" (Mao 1937, 1). His views clearly state that a viable guerrilla effort involves a direct relationship with the conventional strategy. Mao held the opinion that "during the progress of hostilities, guerrillas gradually develop into orthodox forces that operate in conjunction with other units of the regular army" (Mao 1937, 1).

Mao Tse-tung outlines several characteristics of guerrilla warfare. One characteristic is the relationship to political policy, ultimately the population. He explained that successful guerrilla operations demand the cooperation, sympathy, and assistance of the local population. This support of the people, he further relates, is essential to the guerrilla's ability to establish bases from which to operate, to equip guerrilla forces and to sustain them logistically throughout hostilities. Furthermore, Mao insists that guerrillas must work with political and military leadership to effectively organize and conduct operations.

In *On Guerrilla Warfare,* Mao wrote about basic guerrilla strategy. Mao believed that unconventional strategy is based on alertness, mobility, and attack. Further, Mao

explains that this strategy "must be adjusted based on the enemy situation, the terrain, the existing lines of communication, the relative strengths, the weather, and the situation of the people" (Mao 1937, 7). Moreover, he wrote that "In guerrilla strategy, the enemy's rear, flanks, and other vulnerable spots are his vital points, and there he must be harassed, attacked, dispersed, exhausted, and annihilated. Only in this way can guerrillas carry out their mission of independent guerrilla action and coordination with the effort of the regular armies" (Mao 1937, 1). His relevant view of strategy and its relationship to conventional forces is important to this examination.

While Mao emphasized the strategy of guerrillas as an imperative, he definitively delineated the differences between conventional and unconventional forces. Mao expressed that guerrilla forces cannot and should not be centrally controlled because of their organization and communications architecture. Unlike conventional forces, guerrillas operate as small, decentralized units that can not effectively coordinate specific actions. He also emphasizes the aspects of mobility as applied to both conventional and unconventional warfare. His point--the difference between conventional movement and positioning and unconventional mobility--is notable. To the point, Mao writes, "With the war of movement, we may at times combine the war of position. Both of these are assisted by general guerrilla hostilities…In sum, we must promote guerrilla warfare as a necessary strategical auxiliary to orthodox operations, we must neither assign it the primary position in our war strategy nor substitute it for mobile and positional warfare as conducted by orthodox forces" (Mao 1937, 9).

Another significant fundamental outlined in Mao's writing was the organization of guerrilla forces. He considered four points of organization: how guerrilla bands

formed; how guerrilla bands organized; the methods of arming guerrilla bands; and

elements that constitute a guerrilla band. Furthermore, Mao included several ways in

which guerrilla units may originate: from the masses, from the regular army, from the

local militia, from enemy deserters, and from former bandits and bandit groups.

Specifically, Mao states that "Attention paid to the enlistment and organization of

guerrillas of every type and from every source will increase the potentialities of guerrilla

action" (Mao 1937, 14).

Along with organizing unconventional warriors, Mao discussed their equipment

characteristics. He underscored the importance of understanding that guerrillas are lightly

armed and do not require standardization of equipment. Additionally, Mao characterizes

the collection, supply, distribution, and replacement of weapons, ammunition, blankets,

communication materials, transport, and facilities for propaganda work. He makes clear

that equipping a guerrilla force is accomplished by combining resources from

conventional forces, the local population, and equipment captured from the enemy.

Other primary sources contributing to the assessment model, *Counter-guerrilla*

Operations (1986); *Special Forces Unconventional Operations* (2003); and *Special*

Forces Operations (2001), reveals typical aims and goals of guerrillas and their

characteristics. FM 90-8 plainly summarizes the aims or goals of guerrilla forces. This

doctrine lists seven goals which typify unconventional operations: "support overall goals,

gain support for operations, increase the population's vulnerability, lessen government

control, provide psychological victories, tie up government resources, and weaken the

resolve of government forces" (*Counter-guerrilla Operations* 1986, 2-1). Additionally,

this field manual articulates typical strengths and weaknesses associated with guerrilla

forces. As strengths, FM 90-8 includes "intelligence, indigenous characteristics, knowledge, motivation, discipline, limited responsibilities, tactics, and physical condition" (*Counter-guerrilla Operations* 1986, 2-4). Fundamental weaknesses are "limited personnel and resources, individual factors, and operational factors" (*Counter-guerrilla Operations* 1986, 2-5).

Along with the strengths and weaknesses of guerrilla forces, FM 90-8 describes guerrilla support systems. It delineates the differences in popular and logistical support afforded to unconventional forces.

FM 3-05.201 illustrates the spectrum of operations conducted by unconventional forces when supporting conventional forces. This manual lists the five critical missions as "delay and disrupt, interdict lines of communication, deny use of key areas, divert hostile power's attention and resources from the main battle area, and interdict hostile warfighting capabilities" (*Special Forces* 2003, 1-3).

Further, United States Army Doctrine, FM 3-05.20 specifies several operational profiles executed by unconventional units. Among these is sabotage. Doctrine identifies that sabotage "injures or obstructs the national defense of a nation by willfully damaging or destroying any national defense or war material, premises, or utilities, including human and natural resources" (*Special Forces Operations* 2001, 2-9). Furthermore, it explains that sabotage is done selectively with minimal resources and forces.

In summation, military theorists and military doctrine have several common fundamentals and characteristics of guerrilla operations. These fundamentals provide clarity in establishing an assessment model that incorporates historical and contemporary perspectives.

This examination utilizes an assessment model comprised of the common characteristics mutually expressed by military theorists and military doctrine. This model includes five components: leadership, organization, support, strategy, and tactics (see table 1). By analyzing these five areas, this investigation will determine the effects of the Confederacy's unconventional warfare on its conventional strategy.

Table 1.   Assessment Model

LEADERSHIP
ORGANIZATION
SUPPORT
STRATEGY
TACTICS

Leadership is the first component. In this study, analysis of the relationships between guerrilla leaders and conventional commanders is necessary. This investigation examines the leadership of Confederate unconventional units. Germane questions are: How did these guerrilla leaders achieve their position? Were these leaders officially commissioned by the Confederacy? Were these leaders military professionals? By answering these questions, this review demonstrates relationships between conventional and unconventional units as well as shared military objectives, and determines the Confederacy's commitment to waging an unconventional strategy.

Organization is the second component. Probing how guerrilla units were organized and how they were structured to conduct operations helped this research determine the effects of unconventional warfare. Further, this study explores the possible sources that provided the men who served in these units and how the guerrilla leadership organized their forces.

Support is the third component. This investigation examines the support afforded to guerrilla forces in terms of supplies, bases, and intelligence. This analysis will provide invaluable insight into the roles of the local population and the conventional forces in the execution of unconventional operations.

Strategy is the fourth component. Strategy is assessed by examining the ways the Confederacy employed unconventional assets. By closely analyzing their strategy, this research draws out the intentions of political and military leaders, demonstrates relationships between the two, and shows the effectiveness of these efforts.

Tactics is the final component. Tactics is examined by looking at the specific methods used to carry out the strategy of unconventional warfare. Distinctively, this analysis studies the Confederacy's use of mobility, terrain, and the local population.

This study's examination of this component demonstrates the effects of guerrilla warfare on the military at all levels of war, on society, and on political aspects of the war.

Chapter 4, "Analysis," of this examination applies this comprehensive assessment model to several Confederate Partisan Ranger units in order to show the effects of the Confederacy's unconventional strategy.

In conclusion, this investigation adopts an assessment model that effectively incorporates the basic fundamentals and characteristics of guerrilla warfare as expressed

by several military theorists and current United States Army doctrine. These essential components of guerrilla warfare have been validated in history and continue to be relevant on today's battlefield.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Historians continue to research and investigate the number of units organized under the Partisan Ranger Act. Analyzing the officially sanctioned Confederate Partisan Ranger units proved to be a substantial task. However, Table 2 reveals the most recent research into the numbers of Confederate unconventional units.

Table 2.　Confederate Partisan Ranger Units

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Partisan Ranger Corps

Alabama	9
Confederate	5
Florida	2
Georgia	13
Indian Territory	1
Kentucky	19
Louisiana	7
Maryland	2
Mississippi	11
Missouri	22
North Carolina	9
South Carolina	1
Tennessee	8
Texas	12
Virginia	21

_____

Total 142

_____

Source: Bertil Haggman, Confederate Irregular Warfare, 1861 – 1865: Partisan Ranger Units and Guerrilla Commands [article on-line]; available from www.mygen.com/users/outlaw/csa.html; Internet.

Because of the abundant number of units available to examine and the limited scope of this study, this thesis will analyze two specific unconventional units to determine their effects on the overall Confederate conventional strategy. First, this thesis will look at the 43rd Battalion of Virginia Cavalry that operated primarily in the Shenandoah Valley and conducted operations against Union forces. Second, this study will investigate Captain McNeill's Virginia Company Partisan Rangers which fought in West Virginia and neighboring states and executed unconventional missions to disrupt Federal operations.

The assessment model discussed previously in Chapter 3, "Research Methodology," is applied in this chapter to determine what effects Confederate Ranger units had on conventional warfare.

43rd Battalion of Virginia Cavalry

Organization

Following the implementation of the 1862 Partisan Ranger Act, the 43rd Battalion of Virginia Cavalry was established on 10 June 1863 at Rector's Cross Roads, Virginia, under the orders of General Robert E. Lee and General Jeb Stuart. The authority granted to Colonel John S. Mosby to organize a company of volunteers to conduct guerrilla operations in support of the Confederate Army for the length of the war. Consequently, the 43rd Battalion of Virginia Cavalry "became a unit in the Army of Northern Virginia, subject to the orders of Lee and Stuart. This initial company later grew into the 43rd Battalion comprised of several companies, and finally into a regiment, with two battalions of eight companies" (Wert 1990, 71-3). The official sanctioning of this unit

demonstrated the importance that Confederate military leaders placed on the necessity and contributions of unconventional organizations.

The 43rd Battalion, comprised of soldiers from various backgrounds, fluctuated routinely in the number of assigned troops. "At least 1,900 men served in Mosby's command from January 1863 until April 1865. Virginians overwhelmingly filled the ranks of the battalion; however, a contingent of non-Virginians also served. The non-Virginians included many Marylanders, Canadians, British, Irish, Scottish, and even some Northerners from New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania" (Wert 1990, 74-5). Surprisingly, only a small percentage of the 43rd soldiers were professional soldiers. This is unexpected because Mosby cherished the professional soldier who, he believed, brought discipline and military proficiency to the guerrillas.

What effect did the 43rd Battalion's organizational structure have on conventional forces? Although the Confederacy committed invaluable resources in terms of leaders, like Mosby, the cost for soldiers and weapons was insignificant and did not adversely affect conventional formations. As a result, the Confederate Army gained an extremely productive guerrilla force with little investment.

Considering the diverse membership of the unit highlights another interesting influence on the Confederate's war effort. Diversity in the ranks helped create an expansive support network throughout the unit's area of operations. Because of the unit's heterogeneous composition, the guerrillas were able to maximize the relationships of families and friends in local areas (and surrounding states) for support. Additionally, a second order effect was that many of the local population who knew members of the

guerrilla units, and may have otherwise been neutral in the war, were inclined to support

the guerrillas because of the prewar relationships.

Leadership

Examining the 43rd Battalion's leadership undoubtedly outlines the connection

between the conventional and unconventional formations. The Confederate leadership,

specifically Lee and Stuart, selected Colonel John Mosby to organize and lead this unit.

Mosby was a proven conventional leader who had gained the trust and confidence of

Stuart during past battles. Furthermore, by placing Mosby in charge, Lee and Stuart

embraced the directives of the Partisan Ranger Act and ensured a fully commissioned

conventional commander provided the conduit between the conventional and

unconventional commands.

Lee and Stuart's selection of Mosby as the 43rd Battalion leader unmistakably

displays their appreciation and belief in his ability to conduct guerrilla warfare while

maintaining professional military ethics. Additionally, Lee and Stuart probably believed

that they could better control the guerrillas with Mosby in command. Civil War historical

documents provide evidence of the command relationships between Mosby and his

superiors, General Stuart and General Lee. Several reports recorded by Stuart confirm

this idea. Case in point, General Stuart reports, in a letter to Lee on 28 February 1864, on

Mosby's accomplishments in a recent engagement with Union forces.

> Colonel Mosby has just accomplished another one of his daring exploits near
> Dranesville. He attacked a body of the enemy 180 strong, routing them
> completely; killing fifteen, a large number wounded, and seventy prisoners, with
> horses, arms, equipment, etc. His own loss, one killed, four slightly wounded. On
> February [20], he attacked with sixty men, 250 of the enemy's cavalry near
> Upperville, who retreated before him, killing six, including one captain. He
> captured one lieutenant and seven privates. The road was strewn with abandoned

hats, haversacks, etc. Wagons were impressed by the enemy to carry off wounded. His own loss, two wounded. (Official Records, Supplement, Vol. 33, Serial No. 60, 284)

In his memoirs, Colonel Mosby discussed command relationships between General Lee, General Stuart, and himself. He wrote, "After General Stuart was killed, in May, 1864, I reported directly to General Lee" (Mosby 1992, 294).

Also, a letter from James A. Seddon, Secretary of War, to General Robert E. Lee on 24 June 1864 demonstrates that the 43rd Battalion was assigned missions from the highest levels of the Confederate command:

> It seems to me, and I make the suggestion with deference, that the best plan would be for Colonel Mosby, who is now, I suppose, comparatively inactive in the Valley, to be ordered down with a portion of his command to the upper counties of the Neck proper (say about King George), whence he could operate down the Peninsula, giving countenance to the people capable of arms in organizing, and with them punishing the marauders who may venture into any part of the Neck. (Official Records, Series I, Vol. 40, Part II, 684)

The response from General Robert E. Lee to James A. Seddon on 26 June 1864:

> I think it would be very unsafe for Colonel Mosby to go far into the Northern Neck, as his retreat could be easily cut off and his presence there would certainly be betrayed. I will, however, write to him and see if he thinks he can accomplish anything in that quarter. At present, he is operating in the Valley, where I sent him to endeavor to cut off Hunter's communications. (Official Records, Series I, Vol. 40, Part II, 689)

Support

The 43rd Battalion received support from several sources--human and logistical resources from the Army of Northern Virginia, the local population, and captured equipment and supplies from the Union Army. Although all sources proved critical to the effectiveness of the unit and its survivability, the local population was instrumental in the unit's ability to sustain guerrilla operations. For example, "They supplied themselves with the animals from local farmers and from capture of Union horses" (Wert 1990, 80).

Additionally, the guerrillas relied on the local population for hiding places when not conducting operations. Local farmhouses and barns provided shelter for the battalion and reduced the chance of capture by Union forces. These reliable resources from local citizens provided the 43rd with unmatched capabilities for conducting guerrilla operations at night and preserved the ability to rest and refit without fear of compromise.

Local population support facilitated guerrilla and conventional warfare, affecting both armies. Influence of the Shenandoah Valley residents on the Union forces cannot be overstated. The local support network that sustained the guerrillas impacted Federal soldiers from the lowest to the highest levels. General Henry Wager Halleck, Union Army Chief of Staff, analyzed the guerrilla support structure in a letter dated 28 October 1863:

> Most of the difficulties are caused by the conduct of the pretended non-combatant inhabitants of the country. They pretend to act the part of neutrals, but do not. They give aid, shelter and concealment to guerrilla and robber bands like that of Mosby. (Wert 1990, 119)

The opinion of senior Union officers was consistent with many of the soldiers who fought in these areas. Case in point, Joseph Schubert of the 1st New Jersey Cavalry witnessed this support network while being held captive by the 43rd Battalion. He wrote, "I think he had regular places to stop, they all knew who he was and they would give him all the information about our men" (Williamson 1909, 18). The psychological effect, which this support had on Union troops, is difficult to quantify. However, this thesis demonstrates that it did affect Northern morale and confidence.

In addition to affecting the enemy, local population support enhanced both conventional and unconventional Confederate operations. The local support network provided Mosby and his men early warning of enemy movements in and around the area

of operation preventing the capture and compromise of the guerrilla forces. Additionally, the locals provided intelligence, which was used to avoid Union forces and to plan guerrilla and conventional military operations. For example, "In December 1862, a trusted informant, Laura Ratcliffe, warned Mosby of a Federal ambush in Fairfax County, Virginia" (Wert 1990, 123). Mosby was able to avoid the ambush. He routinely utilized informants like Ratcliffe to support his operations. Intelligence provided by citizens allowed guerrillas and conventional forces to conduct operations with an informational advantage. Consequently, Confederate forces achieved surprise and positional superiority during battles and engagements.

A lesser known, but equally important, impact of the guerrillas was the captured equipment, horses and other resources, which they provided to the conventional forces. Often, Mosby and his men would capture large quantities of weapons and equipment and would be unable to use all of them. In such cases, Mosby would deliver these resources to the conventional commanders for their use. Colonel Mosby addressed this point in his memoirs. Specifically, Mosby mentioned the limited logistical support the guerrillas received from the Army of Northern Virginia and stated what the guerrillas provided to Lee's army during the campaign against Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley in 1864.

> We lived on the country where we operated and drew nothing from Richmond except the gray jackets my men wore. We were mounted, armed, and equipped entirely off the enemy, but as we captured a great deal more than we could use, the surplus was sent to supply Lee's army. The mules we sent him furnished a large part of his transportation, and the captured sabers and carbines were turned over to his cavalry---we had no use for them. (Mosby 1992, 221)

The additional resources provided by the guerrillas were critical to the conventional forces because of the limited Confederate industrial base and resources available to maintain their military forces.

Strategy

Investigating the Confederate strategy for employing unconventional units is imperative to determining the effects of the guerrillas. Southern military leaders routinely employed guerrilla units to conduct operational and tactical level reconnaissance and raids in support of conventional operations. They used the guerrillas to gather information about the Federal forces' disposition, composition, and current activities. Further, guerrillas conducted raids to harass and destroy Union combat and logistical forces to gain time and positional advantages over the enemy. On occasion, the 43rd Battalion was used to capture enemy leaders and liberate captured prisoners of war.

The Confederate strategy for employing unconventional forces impacted their overall strategy. Reviewing a number of these strategies in detail is required to determine their larger effects.

Mosby and his Partisan Rangers forced the Union Army to commit numerous conventional units to find and destroy the guerrillas to prevent further disruption of their operations. The North routinely dedicated several types of units to counter-guerrilla operations. Though they preferred to use cavalry units, the guerrillas forced them to employ infantry and other combat units. History provides many accounts to support this position. For example, official records from the One Hundred Sixty-fourth Regiment, New York Volunteers (Infantry) recorded the following entry:

Stationed at Sangster's, Virginia, March-April 1864.

April 4 – Were ordered in pursuit of the guerrilla [John Singleton] Mosby. Marched to Centreville, Virginia. Distance, five miles. Scouted that neighborhood and bivouacked for the night. (Official Records Supplement, Vol. 47, Serial No. 59, 498)

Additionally, in a correspondence from Brigadier General J.J. Abercrombie to the Union Chief of Staff, Major General H. W. Halleck on 17 May 1864, General Abercrombie describes how Union forces were often diverted from other missions to fight Mosby and his Partisan Rangers.

> Mosby , with about 200 men, attacked a detachment from Falmouth, within about 4 miles of this place, between Potomac Creek and the Fredericksburg road (three-quarters of a mile from the latter), and wounded the guide, Davis, in the head. I am about to dispatch 300 cavalry in pursuit. I have every reason to believe they are concentrating to make a decent on the depot, or to attack the train on its way to the front, as hundreds of wagons are constantly on the road. Three hundred cavalry—all I have mounted—are not sufficient to guard trains, scour the country, picket etc. There should be at least 800 or 900. The Eight Illinois Cavalry, part of which I have, know this country. (Official Records, Vol. 36, Part II, 856)

General Phillip Sheridan, while operating in the Shenandoah Valley against General Early and his Confederate forces, believed that he did not have sufficient forces to defeat the 43rd Battalion and General Early's conventional forces. However, the 43rd Battalion had been so successful in harassing and destroying his troops that he was forced to dedicate forces to conduct counter-guerrilla operations. Therefore, "In August 1864, General Sheridan ordered the creation of an independent command with the sole mission of operating against the Rangers" (Wert 1990, 202). Sheridan organized this unit known as the "Legion of Honor" with 100 troops. By combining the effects of conventional and unconventional forces, the Confederacy was able to force the enemy commander to dedicate a portion of his most limited resource, soldiers, to reducing the effects of the guerrilla force.

Guerrillas were routinely used to disrupt Union rear areas and logistical units. Because the 43rd Battalion was an effective guerrilla force and the Confederate leadership properly employed them, they had substantial effect on the enemy's ability to

move troops and supplies to forward areas. In official correspondence dated 26 May 1864

from Captain A. V. Barringer, Chief Quartermaster, Department of West Virginia, to

Lieutenant-Colonel Halpine, Assistant Adjutant General, Headquarters in the Field, he

describes the effect Mosby and his men had on the Federal logistical process.

> Colonel: A courier from a detachment of cavalry sent to escort a return train from
> the front has reported that Mosby is in the vicinity of the pike with 400 men,
> watching the movements of trains. The train that started this morning, in
> consequence of this, will be delayed. A battalion of the Fifth New York Heavy
> Artillery (as Infantry) is now en route to the front. The colonel commanding has
> been directed by Colonel Maulsby, commanding post, to take charge of the train,
> and has authority to regulate its progress, and to permit it to proceed rapidly,
> solely with the cavalry escort, when in his opinion it will be prudent so to do.
> (Official Records, Series I, Vol. 37, Part I, 543).

The delay of reinforcements and supplies disrupted Union operations and allowed

Confederate forces time to better prepare and conduct their operations.

Tactics

The tactics used by the 43rd Battalion created an asymmetrical effect on the

battlefield. Since the conventional forces still waged war in the Napoleonic style of

warfare, the tactics of the guerrillas afforded them an extreme advantage during troop

engagements. These tactics included the use of small units on horseback, night

operations, swift attacks followed by rapid withdrawals, and the utilization of disguises to

masquerade as Union soldiers. These tactics were unfamiliar to professional soldiers of

the time and presented great challenges to the opposition's conventional leaders.

One of the most striking characteristics of the 43rd Battalion's tactics was

simultaneous small unit attacks against Federal guard posts and assembly areas. For

example, a report from General Augur to General Lazelle describes the relentless and

paralyzing effects this tactic had on the Union forces.

Last night, at about 10.30 o'clock one of our pickets was attacked near this camp; the attacking party was driven off, with a loss to the rebels of one horse, and it is believed one man wounded. About the same hour the picket posts on the Braddock Road and on the road to Falls Church and Annandale, were attacked simultaneously and driven in. This morning at about 6 A.M., one of our pickets, about half a mile west of the village of Falls Church, was attacked and one vidette captured. Late to-day two of our picket posts between here and Annandale were attacked at about the same time by a force of between twenty and thirty men. Five men were captured and seven horses, while four men escaped. At about the same hour the picket post on the Little River pike, towards Fairfax Court House, from Annandale, was attacked, and one sergeant and a horse were wounded; two men and three horses captured. (Mosby 1992, 230-1)

Simultaneous attacks often paralyzed Federal units and created fear among the leaders and within the ranks of soldiers. This tactic forced the Union soldiers to continuously anticipate contact with the guerrillas and forced leaders to increase security measures during the hours of darkness. The following correspondence substantiates this point.

01 September 1864, a letter from General Gansevoort to General Augur

I have reliable information that Mosby is still lying in the woods in front of your lines, and expects to make an attack to-night somewhere upon it. Please have all your men on duty notified of this, that they may be on their guard and take proper precautions. If not successful tonight, he proposes to remain until he strikes some important blow. (Mosby 1992, 231)

This tactic also factored into the views of the troops on the ground. Soldiers began to fear the guerrillas and clearly understood that they could be attacked at any time. A soldier in the 3rd Pennsylvania Cavalry, part of General Sheridan's army operating in the Shenandoah Valley, stated "This is the most dangerous place to picket I ever saw" (Wert 1990, 201).

Another guerrilla tactic that was extremely effective against the Union troops was conducting operations at night and in adverse weather conditions. During the Civil War, conventional forces rarely fought at night or during extreme weather. As a result, the 43rd Battalion's use of these circumstances allowed them to achieve surprise and catch Union

forces off-guard. The guerrillas often took advantage of these conditions with resounding results. For example, in March 1863, Mosby and his men conducted several daring raids against Union forces in Fairfax County Virginia. Mosby emphasized how their use of weather conditions contributed to their successful operations. He wrote, "that the weather conditions favored my success. There was a melting snow on the ground, a mist, and about dark, a drizzling rain" (Mosby 1992, 132). Taking advantage of the weather and the darkness, Mosby was successful in destroying and capturing many of the enemy and further contributed to the psychological advantage of the guerrillas.

Significant Operations

Mosby's Partisan Rangers conducted operations, which dramatically shaped the battlefield in the Eastern Theater. The 43rd Battalion's operations proved vital to the Confederate's wartime effort at both the strategic and operational levels. The most shining example was Mosby's operations against General Sheridan's forces in the Shenandoah Valley.

On 10 August 1864, under the orders of General Grant, General Sheridan began to move his army from Harper's Ferry up through the Shenandoah Valley. Sheridan's task was to defeat or force the withdrawal of General Early's Confederate forces from the Shenandoah. Grant believed that if Early were removed from the Shenandoah, the Union Army would sever the Confederate lines of communications and create favorable conditions to defeat Lee's army at Richmond and ultimately end the war.

To meet this challenge, General Lee continued to employ Early in the defense of the Shenandoah Valley and used Mosby's guerrilla force to harass Sheridan's rear areas and disrupt his lines of communication. In his memoirs, Mosby described his mission in

the Shenandoah as "The main object of my campaign was to vex and embarrass Sheridan, and if possible, to prevent his advance into the interior of the State" (Mosby 1992, 221).

Lee's strategy to use guerrilla forces to attack Union railroads and rear areas had devastating effects on the North. Guerrilla operations prevented timely movement of Union forces to meet their operational requirements. Case in point, in October 1864, General Grant ordered additional forces from General Sheridan who was still conducting operations in the Shenandoah Valley. Grant had anticipated that with the additional forces from Sheridan, he would be able to decisively attack Lee's army at Petersburg, Virginia prior to Lee receiving reinforcements. However, the 43rd Battalion's relentless pressure on Sheridan's forces severely affected Union communications, destroyed vital stretches of railroad and prevented the movement of forces from Sheridan's army to Grant's. Several important correspondences between Generals Sheridan, Halleck, and Grant sustain this point.

Correspondence from General Sheridan to General Halleck dated 29 September 1864:

> I have been unable to communicate more frequently on account of the operations of guerrillas in my rear. They have attacked every party, and I have sent my dispatches with a view of economizing as much as possible. (Mosby 1992, 244)

Correspondence from General Sheridan to General Halleck dated 12 October 1864:

> I have ordered the Sixth Corps (except one brigade now at Winchester) to march to Alexandria to-morrow morning. I have ordered General Augur to concentrate all his forces at Manassas Junction or Bull Run until he hears from me. He could not complete the railroad to Front Royal without additional forces from me, and to give him that force to do the work and transport the troops by rail to Alexandria would require more time. (Mosby 1992, 244)

Ultimately, the 43rd Battalion's successful operations prevented the movement of Union forces and delayed the Union's eventual victory over the Army of Northern Virginia. Guerrilla operations against the Federal rear areas influenced the Union conventional

fight. Most importantly, Sheridan was forced to commit his combat forces to protect his lines of communication and could not effectively communicate with his superiors because of guerrilla activities. Sheridan's fear of guerrilla attacks made him more apprehensive and prevented the Northern army from seizing the initiative.

Captain McNeill's Virginia Company Partisan Rangers

Organization

"Captain John Hanson McNeill organized the Virginia Company Partisan Rangers in 1962 under the authority of the Ranger Partisan Act. McNeill led the 210 man company in operations which were conducted well over a hundred miles from any Confederate controlled territory" (Bright 1951, 5). This company, like the 43rd Battalion, was organized with conventional soldiers, others who fought out of loyalty to the Confederacy and others who sought adventure. Unlike Mosby's Rangers, McNeill received little help in organizing his company and relied heavily on his own military experience and that of his subordinates.

Historical documents do not describe comprehensively the organizational structure of the company. However, history reveals that the company was headquartered in Hardy County, West Virginia, and conducted decentralized operations throughout the state and neighboring Maryland.

McNeill's company of Rangers included many members from the local area. As a result, the guerrillas were able to establish an expansive support network consisting of family, friends, and Southern sympathizers. This thesis demonstrates how important this support network was in the execution of guerrilla operations.

Leadership

The commander of the Virginia Company Partisan Rangers, Captain John Hanson McNeill, was a professional military officer with a proven record. Early in the Civil War, "Captain McNeill fought at the battles of Carthage, Wilson's Creek, and then at Lexington" (Bright 1951, 5). Like Mosby, McNeill personally selected his officers and soldiers to ensure the highest quality of company personnel.

Captain McNeill's service as a conventional leader, and his personal capabilities, helped establish a positive working relationship with conventional commanders. Additionally, this association facilitated command and control of the guerrillas. McNeill routinely conducted his operations under the orders of conventional commanders. Most significantly, McNeill cooperated with Colonel Imboden and General Early's operations in the Shenandoah Valley. The command and control structure is touted in an official report from General Robert E. Lee to John C. Breckinridge, Secretary of War.

> General Early reports that Lieutenant McNeill with thirty men, on the morning of the 21st, entered Cumberland, captured and brought out Generals Crook and Kelley, the Adjutant-General of the Department, two privates, and the headquarters flags, without firing a gun, though a considerable force is stationed in the vicinity. Lieutenant McNeill and a party deserve much credit for this bold exploit. Their prisoners will reach Staunton today. (J.C. Saunders Papers 1986, 4)

General Lee often had high praise for McNeill's exploits. After capturing a Federal wagon train at Williamsport and the town of Romney, General Lee wrote in a correspondence "You will find, I think, Captain McNeill bold and intelligent, and others in the cavalry" (Official Records, Series I, Vol. 33, 1067). Another documented example is a correspondence from Lee to Colonel J. D. Imboden on 10 January 1863. "COLONEL: I thank you for letter of the 2d instant, received yesterday. I am much gratified to hear of the gallant conduct of Captains McNeill and Imboden, and hope they

will continue to harass the enemy as much as possible" (Official Records, Series I, Vol. 21, 1087).

These command and control relationships connect the tactical level guerrilla operations with the operational level. General Lee, Commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, implemented the capabilities of unconventional units to shape the battlefield for operational objectives. The disruption the railroad and Federal lines of communication by McNeill's company helped to shape Lee's battles in later stages of the war.

Support

Consistent with guerrilla forces, McNeill's company required support from various sources. Initially, soldiers assigned to the company outfitted themselves upon enlistment.

> Each man furnished his own outfit and arms. Most clothes were captured from the enemy, and many of the Rangers throughout their service wore blue Union trousers, of necessity. The question of obtaining food was always present, and each man had to secure almost everything for himself. "Mammy" Little was the self-styed commissary, but the supplies for the entire company were contained in his two saddle bags, and usually these were almost empty. (Bright 1951, 5-6)

However, as the war progressed, the guerrillas heavily relied on the use of captured Union equipment and support from the local population. This assistance ensured the company's ability to conduct guerrilla operations and maintain their benefit to Confederate conventional forces.

Another contributor to the Rangers was the citizens of the region. The general public appreciably provided food, shelter, and horses to the guerrillas. Reliable as Mosby's support network, McNeill's neighborhood of sympathizers allowed his unit to hide and refit in safety. Routinely, the population played a vital role in the Ranger's

missions. On McNeill's famous raid in Cumberland, Maryland, local citizens provided

information necessary for planning the raid. Additionally, during execution, locals

allowed the guerrillas to use their homes as rendezvous and supply points, which

facilitated the raid.

Because both sides knew that most locals provided support to the guerrillas,

Northern soldiers never felt secure when occupying these areas. Federal troops continued

to commit much of their time and effort in safeguarding resources and information in fear

of local citizens aiding the guerrillas.

Strategy

The Confederate military leaders maintained a similar strategy in the employment

of McNeill's company as applied to the 43rd Battalion. General Lee routinely used

McNeill's company to attack the enemy's rear areas to disrupt communication, logistics,

and the movement of forces on the battlefield. Additionally, McNeill's unit was used to

perform scouting duties and provided intelligence on the enemy's activities to

Confederate conventional commanders. "McNeill had three main objectives for his

operations: (1) to create general havoc among the Federal troops in the area; (2) disrupt

traffic and communications on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad; (3) be a main source of

supply in the foraging of beef cattle for the Confederate armies in the Shenandoah

Valley" (Bright 1951, 6).

Scouting for conventional commanders was an important mission for the

guerrillas. The partisans provided Confederate leaders with a deep reconnaissance asset,

providing valuable information about the enemy's activities. For example, in January

1863, Brigadier General W. E. Jones of the Confederate Army embarked on several raids

from the Shenandoah Valley to Moorefield and Petersburg. McNeill's company provided

reconnaissance for the infiltration and withdrawal of Jones's forces and participated in

the raids. As a result, Jones' mission was a complete success and the partisans played a

vital role. On a 03 January 1863 Brigadier General W. E. Jones reported on the raids and

described the use of McNeill's company to gather information on Union forces and their

activities.

> McNeill's company, of Imboden's [regiment], and part of Company F, Seventh
> Virginia Cavalry, were sent to watch the roads west of Moorefield, and, late at
> night, reported heavy re-enforcements of infantry, artillery, and cavalry from New
> Creek. This and the condition of my commissariat rendered as immediate return
> to this place expedient. While on this duty these companies captured 33 men, 46
> horses, and 5 wagons, and killed 1 man….The conduct of the men was admirable,
> and my thanks are especially due to Colonel Dulany, Captain [J. H] McNeill, of
> Imboden's [regiment]…as indefatigable and reliable scouts, have rendered me
> invaluable service. (Official Records, Series I, Vol. 21, 747-8)

Most notably, McNeill's Rangers provided significant logistical support to the

conventional forces. The Confederate army struggled throughout the Civil War to feed

and equip its forces. No doubt, the services provided by the partisan rangers helped

maintain the South's fighting force. For example, following the Southern defeat at the

Battle of Gettysburg, McNeill's Rangers supplied General Lee's army with "740 heads of

sheep, 160 heads of cattle, and 40 horses which they procured from Pennsylvania"

(Official Records, Series I, Vol. 51, 731). Another example occurred on 01 January 1864.

McNeill's Rangers, in support of Major General Fitz Lee, performed a forage raid in the

South Branch Valley. The partisans were able to capture numerous supplies from Federal

forces. "They successfully secured 3,000 pounds of bacon and captured several

prisoners" (Official Records, Series I, Vol. 29, 106).

The partisan's foraging efforts to support conventional units was especially important in assisting General Early's efforts in the Shenandoah Valley. In early 1864, McNeill supported Early in reconnaissance and capturing critical supplies to feed his forces. During this mission, "McNeill provided Early's troops with 300 head of cattle" (Early 1989, 267-9).

The effects of the Confederate unconventional strategy were far-reaching. Like Mosby, McNeill's forces influenced the enemy's ability to effectively function from the highest levels to the most junior soldier. Additionally, as the war progressed, these impacts had even more devastating consequences. The guerrillas prejudiced the decisions of commanders and drew much of their attention to dealing with the harassment and disruption created by the Confederate guerrillas.

Northern commanders quickly found that much of their mental effort and operational focus centered on the southern partisans. This effect prevented the Union conventional commanders from concentrating all resources to the conventional fight. For example, Brigadier General Kelley, a Federal commander, began to feel the effects of the guerrillas. In a correspondence dated 22 May 1864, General Kelley expressed his frustration to Colonel Higgins, Federal commander at Green Spring.

> As soon as practicable send Captain Hart with 125 or 150 men on a scout up the east side of the river, to Moorefield and vicinity after McNeill. It is not necessary for me to give Captain Hart any minute instructions. He is well acquainted in that vicinity. I will simply say I want McNeill killed, captured, or driven out of this valley. (Official Records, Series I, Vol. 37, Part II, 522-3)

General Kelley continued to be frustrated by the unconventional strategy. In July 1864, Kelley's correspondence demonstrated his concern regarding guerrilla actions in his area of operations.

McNeill crossed the river below Old Town and robbed several stores at that place last night . . .. You must keep yourself fully posted in regard to McNeill's movements, or your command will be all gobbled up some of these fine mornings. If you have not sent scouts out send them at once. (Official Records, Series I, Vol. 37, Part II, 517-8)

General Kelley and many other Union leaders were forced to commit resources and personal attention to the guerrillas. As a result, leaders were unable to concentrate all efforts towards conventional military activities and establishing stability in occupied areas.

Tactics

Guerrilla tactics remained consistent when comparing McNeill's partisans with Mosby's men. McNeill conducted swift attacks on the enemy, maximizing speed from horses, adverse weather, night operations, and disguise. Like the 43rd Battalion, using these tactics created the asymmetrical affect against the Northern military.

Many guerrilla engagements with the Yankees proved to be indecisive but cumulatively had devastating effects. McNeill's company used small forces attacking simultaneously from different directions. This tactic often surprised and disoriented the enemy resulting in a guerrilla victory. For example, in a report from Colonel Joseph Thoburn, First West Virginia Infantry on 20 November 1863, he illustrates the tactics of McNeill's raiders.

The attack was first made upon the advanced guard of 40 men under Lieutenant Hardman, who was killed the first fire, when his command broke for the woods. Firing commenced in the rear almost simultaneously, but by what was supposed a smaller force. (Official Records, Series I, Vol. 29, 649)

Tactics used by McNeill's command resulted in resounding success in capturing Federal troops and equipment. Case in point, an extract from the "Record of Events," Fourth Brigade, Department of West Virginia:

> On the morning of September 11, Major Stephens, with six companies of the First [West] Virginia Infantry and Captain Barr's company of cavalry were ordered to Moorefield, West Virginia, 9 miles distant from Petersburg, by Colonel J. A. Mulligan, commanding Fifth Brigade. Eight commissioned officers and 135 enlisted men of the First [West] Virginia and 17 men of Captain Barr's cavalry were captured by Captain McNeill's rebel cavalry. (Official Records, Series I, Vol. 29, 105)

Another example that demonstrates the tactics and effects of guerrilla operations is outlined in a report from Confederate General J. D. Imboden on 19 November 1863.

> On the same day, 16th instant, Captain McNeill, in command of his own company and a detachment from the Sixty-second Regiment, under Lieutenant Moorman, attacked a train of eighty odd wagons near Burlington, in Hampshire, hauling supplies to Averell, at Petersburg, and after a sharp fight whipped the escort of 100 infantry, captured and brought away 25 prisoners and 245 good horses, with all their harness, and set fire to the wagons . . .. Captain McNeill took to the mountains, and by a wonderful march (for rapidity) escaped, though pursued by over 600 of Averell's best cavalry, his own force being little over 100 men. (Official Records, Series I, Vol. 29, 644)

A 23 November 1863 correspondence, from Colonel Mulligan, Second Division Department of West Virginia, reveals the affects on leaders.

> CAPTAIN: I enclose herewith official report of Colonels Campbell, Thoburn, Bruce, and Captain Jeffers, Fourteenth [West] Virginia, of the attack of the enemy under McNeill on our supply train near Burlington, West Virginia, on the morning of the 16th instant. I also enclose copy of a communication addressed by me to General Averell, informing him of McNeill's movements, to which the general replied from near the junction of the Moorefield and Alleghany roads, that he had been appraised of the attack at 11.30 a.m., and had started a portion of his command to endeavor to cut him off. Believing from the reports obtained that the loss inflicted was owing to a want of precaution, a want of skill, and a want of fighting, I have ordered charges to be preferred and forwarded against the commanding officer of the escort. (Official Records, Series I, Vol. 29, 646)

The effects of guerrilla tactics disrupted Union plans to place Northern

sympathizers into local political offices throughout the region. The North attempted to

reinstate local governments and civic functions in occupied areas as rapidly as possible to

restore some stability. McNeill's outfit would play a role in disrupting the Federal backed

elections. The guerrillas would cause as much confusion and fear among voters and

Union soldiers to dissuade any possible voters from going to the polls. An illustration of

this occurred on 08 November 1864 in Hampshire and Hardy counties. "During this

election, the presence of McNeill's Rangers in the area prohibited most voters from going

to the polls and prevented a successful election process" (Official Records, Vol. 43, Part

II, 542). This guerrilla tactic had several effects. First, it barred the Union forces from

establishing local governments comprised of sympathetic local citizens. The North's

inability to rapidly re-establish stability in small towns and regions throughout Virginia

and West Virginia forced the Union army to commit additional forces and assets to

maintaining order in these areas. Second, the guerrilla actions instilled hope and

confidence in Southern sympathizers and solidified their commitment to Southern

independence.

Significant Operations

McNeill and his Rangers were able to influence many Confederate military

undertakings at the operational and tactical levels of war. However, McNeill's

Cumberland Raid in February 1865 may be the most noteworthy for highlighting the

strategy, tactics, and impact of guerrillas. During this raid, McNeill's guerrillas

successfully infiltrated heavily occupied Union areas, captured two enemy generals and

damaged the Union telegraph system. This unmatched guerrilla success reinforced in the

minds of Federal soldiers at all levels that the guerrillas could effectively operate anywhere in the area of operations.

The Cumberland Raid began, like most successful operations, with human intelligence provided by a member of McNeill's company. McNeill dispatched a fellow Partisan to his hometown, Cumberland, Maryland, to gather necessary information for the raid. McNeill's reconnaissance element, Sergeant John Fay, recruited several local citizens to assist in this task. Sergeant Fay and his assistants gathered the information pertaining to the Union's General Kelley and General Cook's headquarters. On 19 February, McNeill was informed that the circumstances were most favorable to execute the raid.

Upon receipt of this information, McNeill organized his raiding force and began an infiltration into Union territory. The Rangers carefully moved to a rendezvous point, a local farmer's house, where they met with Sergeant Fay. Fay gave McNeill and the raiders an information update, and the guerrillas finalized their plan. "After McNeill briefed the detailed plan for the raid to his subordinates, weapons and equipment were inspected; and the guerrillas set-off to conduct their mission" (McNeill 1906, 410).

Maximizing the nighttime and snowy, cold conditions, the Partisans moved towards their objective. "They stopped several times on their final approach into Cumberland at local farmhouses to warm themselves and make final preparations for the mission" (McNeill 1906, 411).

The raiders, approaching the town, were stopped several times by Federal pickets. McNeill's men quickly captured the pickets and continued towards the objective. Upon reaching Cumberland, the Rangers were able to move inside the general's headquarters

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and apprehend the two Union leaders. Another guerrilla team went to the telegraph office to temporarily disable their communications.

McNeill and his men quickly took the prisoners and departed Cumberland. The Federal forces were unable to effectively pursue the raiders. The prisoners were initially taken to General Early's headquarters and ultimately taken to Richmond.

The capture of high-ranking leaders also dampened the decision-making process of the enemy. As a result, the enemy leaders were less likely to specifically target guerrilla forces, less they become a target themselves. Additionally, the success of the Cumberland Raid strengthened the use of guerrilla operations, clearly demonstrating to Federal operational and tactical leaders that guerrillas could directly impact their operations.

In conclusion, the Confederacy's unconventional strategy contributed to their conventional strategy by affecting both friendly and enemy operations. Southern Partisan Rangers forced Union leaders to commit substantial troops and material resources to the security of rear areas. As this thesis demonstrates, Confederate guerrillas created confusion and fear among the Federal ranks which ultimately influenced their decision-making. Guerrilla operations even weighed on the mind of President Abraham Lincoln. In a letter dated 17 February 1863 to General Rosecrans, Lincoln expressed the following thoughts on the Confederate strategy:

> In no way does the enemy give us so much trouble, at so little expense to himself, as by the raids of rapidly moving small bodies of troops (largely if not wholly mounted) harassing and discouraging loyal residents, supplying themselves with provisions, clothing, horses and the like, surprising and capturing small detachments of our forces, and breaking our communications. (Basler 1953, 108)

The Partisan units helped the Confederate cause by providing an inexpensive military asset that reaped a huge reward. Guerrillas added a strategic and operational reconnaissance capability that enhanced conventional operations. The unconventional efforts, which disrupted the movement of Federal troops and communication between operational commanders, helped General Robert E. Lee shape the battlefield. These influences are not easily quantified but clearly demonstrate the importance of the guerrillas at all levels of war. Chapter 5, "Conclusions," summarizes the Confederate Partisan Ranger's effects and examines their relevancy for today's military leader.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

This study reveals several important discoveries and highlights relevant correlations to modern warfare. These results provide interesting perspectives of unconventional warfare as applied by Confederate leaders. Most importantly, this analysis recognizes considerable lessons that today's military leaders can incorporate into contemporary operations.

Reviewing this study's research questions is essential to further discussion of the discoveries and significance of this research. First, did the Confederacy adopt an unconventional war strategy as part of their overall strategy? Second, how did conventional military leaders apply unconventional warfare? Third, what effects did unconventional warfare have on conventional operations? Fourth, was unconventional warfare at the tactical level linked to operational and strategic level operations?

First, did the Confederacy adopt an unconventional war strategy as part of their overall strategy? Analysis of Confederate military operations in the Eastern Theater clearly demonstrates that Southern leaders adopted unconventional warfare as a supporting strategy and were able to achieve substantial results. The creation and implementation of the 1862 Ranger Partisan Act combined with numerous Confederate operations sustains this position. Although most conventional commanders, because of military training or experiences, did not believe unconventional warfare was an honorable method of waging warfare, many utilized its effects because of necessity. Many historians argue that the Confederacy failed to engage in this type of warfare. However,

this study undoubtedly demonstrates that the Confederacy combined conventional and unconventional strategies to accomplish military objectives.

Second, how did conventional military leaders apply unconventional warfare? Chapter 4, "Analysis," details the Southern military leadership's application of guerrilla operations. Guerrilla operations routinely targeted Northern lines of communications to disrupt conventional actions. Additionally, Partisan Rangers conducted missions to capture key leaders, harass combat forces, gather intelligence, and provide logistical support. Southern leaders effectively used guerrilla units to create asymmetrical conditions, which provided noteworthy advantages. Unconventional tactics and strategies created fear and uncertainty throughout all levels of the Union chain of command. Confederate commanders were ultimately able to mask their vulnerabilities and exploit those of their enemies because they employed unconventional forces.

Third, what effects did unconventional warfare have on conventional operations? Analyzing the effects shows that unconventional forces were able to severely hamper Union activities. The guerrillas forced Federal commanders to commit forces to protect their lines of communications and expend extensive resources to guard against guerrilla influences. Moreover, the Union leaders diverted combat units to hunt down Southern partisans. Confederate employment of unconventional units facilitated conventional operations by prolonging the ability to preserve combat power and delaying Union forces from achieving their operational objectives. The 43rd Battalion's effectiveness in the Shenandoah prevented Union troops from being rapidly committed to General Grant's army, which eventually prolonged the Civil War by a minimum of six months. Furthermore, strategically, the guerrilla's assistance to General Early's defense of the

Shenandoah created synergy by using conventional and unconventional forces simultaneously in a coordinated fashion and prevented the Union's use of Sheridan's forces elsewhere for nearly a year.

Despite the effects demonstrated in this study, many of them cannot be quantified. For example, the impact of guerrilla operations on the individual soldier and lower level commanders are difficult to translate into tangible effects. If a company commander fails to send reconnaissance party on a mission because of guerrilla activities, the result is less information and a delay to a unit's decisive action. This consequence is compounded when considering all levels of tactical units. This psychological effect of guerrilla operations is the most beneficial aspect and almost impossible to determine.

Fourth, was unconventional warfare at the tactical level linked to operational and strategic level operations? This study presents several concrete examples of relationships between conventional and unconventional leaders at all levels of war. President Davis and General Lee managed and allocated unconventional forces in support of conventional operations to facilitate strategic and operational goals. Their use of Partisan Rangers to operationally deny the Shenandoah Valley to Union forces exemplifies the linkage between the two modes of war fighting. Considering this evidence, the linkage between unconventional tactical operations and conventional operational and strategic objectives is irrefutable.

Perhaps the most beneficial aspect of this study is the lessons, which modern leaders can apply to current battlefield conditions. Two notable lessons can be drawn from this analysis. First, the integration of unconventional units can effectively shape conventional operations. This study demonstrated that conventional commanders who

properly employed unconventional assets achieved exceptional results. Today's leaders must maximize unconventional units to create required conditions for conventional units. Unconventional forces provide special capabilities that conventional forces do not possess. Therefore, it is imperative for modern leaders to request and competently combine these valuable assets. Conversely, unconventional commanders must understand how conventional operations are conducted and how their units can best assist conventional commanders. Second, understanding the effects which unconventional forces provide is instrumental for conventional leaders. Contemporary commanders must understand the strengths and weaknesses of unconventional units for successful employment. Leaders must educate themselves on the capabilities that these forces bring to the fight. Understanding this asset is the first step to maximizing the combined effects of these two methods of combat. Additionally, distrust and misunderstandings between unconventional and conventional leaders still exist today. Similar to the Civil War era, present-day leaders must put aside preconceived notions and inform themselves on the potential of unconventional forces.

<div align="center">Recommendations</div>

In light of this and other studies, research should continue to be devoted to this subject. Examining other Partisan Ranger units, which operated in the Eastern Theater, as well as other regions during the Civil War, can make further contributions. Few historians have focused on other lesser-known Confederate guerrilla units who may have significantly contributed to the South's conventional strategy.

Furthermore, today's relationships between conventional and unconventional forces should be researched to understand how effective current cooperation and integration is affecting military operations.

The study of unconventional warfare in the Civil War provides discoveries into the Confederacy's employment, effects, and successes when combining unconventional and conventional operations. The complexity of today's battlefield requires modern militaries to integrate both modes of warfighting to achieve their objectives. Contemporary leaders must understand the capabilities and limitations of unconventional and conventional forces to win in present operating conditions.

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