



RUSSIA'S NEW GENERATION WARFARE IN UKRAINE: IMPLICATIONS FOR LATVIAN DEFENSE POLICY



Russia's New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: Implications for Latvian Defense Policy

Jānis Bērziņš

Introduction

Russia considers Ukraine (and Belarus) as part of itself, something that was lost with the collapse of the Soviet Union. As Henry Kissinger put it, in an open editorial in the Washington Post, "to Russia, Ukraine can never be just a foreign country."¹ Moreover, it is considered, together with Belarus, to be a guarantee of Russia's territorial integrity. This is a very sensitive issue. Historically, one of Russia's most important defense strategies is "depth".² This explains why it expanded its borders to the West as far as possible. For Russia, it was already difficult to accept the Baltic States becoming NATO members in 2004. Moscow claims the West guaranteed that former Soviet republics and satellites would be left as a neutral buffer zone. True or not, the fact is that nowadays NATO's border is approximately 160 km from St. Petersburg, instead of 1,600 km during the period of the Soviet Union. In the hypothetical case of Ukraine joining NATO, the city of Belgorod that was deep inside the USSR would be on the border.

Since for Russia, Ukraine is supposed to be a close ally or, at best, neutral, it considers the involvement of the United States and the European Union in Ukrainian internal affairs to be a direct confrontation to its regional interests. Moscow is rightly convinced that the United States and the European Union were working to attract the Ukraine to their sphere of influence, ignoring Russia's natural right to the region. Russia's goal has always been to make Ukraine a friendly and subordinate partner. For Russia, after the West's interference, this seems to be further out of reach than ever.

Still, notwithstanding the fact that the Russian government is convinced that the West has been financing the Ukrainian opposition and many organizations like NGO's with the objective of destabilizing the Yanukovitch government, it signed an agreement led by the European Union and mediated by the foreign ministers of Poland, France and Germany, to end the protests on 21st February. The deal included restoring the Ukrainian Constitution as it was between 2004 and 2010 until September, when constitutional reform was expected to be com-

¹ Kissinger, H. (2014). *How the Ukraine crisis ends*. The Washington Post, March 6. Available on http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/henry-kissinger-to-settle-the-ukraine-crisis-start-at-the-end/2014/03/05/46dad868-a496-11e3-8466-d34c451760b9_story.html.

² The idea of "depth" as military strategy means the distance between opponent forces and the main structural assets of a country (military frontlines, bases, or industrial and commercial hubs). In operational terms, the greater the distance to be traversed by enemy forces to reach these bases, the better are the chances of a successful defensive operation. Napoleon and Hitler's invasions of Russia/Soviet Union are good examples of the significance of the "depth" for a country's defense.

pleted; early presidential elections no later than December 2014; an investigation of the government's violence to be conducted jointly by the opposition government, and the Council of Europe; a veto on declaring a state of emergency; amnesty for protesters arrested since 17th February; surrendering of public buildings occupied by protesters; the confiscation of illegal weapons; new electoral laws to be passed and the establishment of a new Central Election Commission.³

Although for Russia the agreement was not optimal, Moscow considered it better to face a temporary loss than to face increasing instability. There would be time to establish more favorable conditions for winning the next presidential elections, substituting Yanukovitch with someone more competent. However, the opposition continued to push for Yanukovitch's resignation. Speaking to the crowd from the stage on Maidan, Volodymir Parasiuk declared that if Yanukovitch did not resign by 10am on 22nd February an armed coup would occur.⁴ Police withdrew, leaving government buildings, including the President's residence, unguarded. A new coalition was created in the Ukrainian parliament, with 28 members of its members leaving the pro-Russian Party of Regions' faction.⁵

Snipers started shooting at both protesters and the police, with two versions emerging of what was happening. One, supported by Russia, was that the opposition, backed by Western countries was behind the shootings; the other, was that the snipers were from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the SBU, acting on Soviet era type plans, with the objective of escalating the conflict, thus justifying an operation to end the protests.⁶ If this was true, the result was the opposite, since it gave more power to the opposition, which was able to pass a bill in the parliament impeaching President Yanukovitch. He and other government officials left the country, and a new government was formed. This triggered Crimea's annexation by Russia.

First, Russia considered Yanukovitch's impeachment to be illegal, therefore the new government was not legitimate. According to the Constitution of Ukraine, the procedure to impeach the President must observe the following procedure: a.) the President is formally charged with a crime; b.) the Constitutional Court reviews the charge; c.) the Parliament votes. The impeachment takes place only if there is a three-fourths majority. Second, Russia considers the new government to have been formed by extremists, who are jeopardizing the security not only of Russians in the Ukraine, but also of Ukrainians themselves. Therefore, Russia argues that it has a moral mission to protect Russians minorities in case their security

³ See the "Agreement on the Settlement of Crisis in Ukraine", available at http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/cae/servlet/contentblob/671348/publicationFile/190025/140221-UKR_Erklaerung.pdf.

⁴ See "Люди поставили ультиматум: отставка Януковича до утра", <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/02/21/7015590/>.

⁵ See "28 MPs quit Party of Regions faction in Rada", available at <http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/191768.html>.

⁶ See "Kiev snipers: Who was behind them?", Available at <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Security-Watch/2014/0308/Kiev-snipers-Who-was-behind-them>.

and basic rights are violated. Third, Russia is convinced that the West betrayed the agreement signed on 21st February, as the opposition continued to push for Yanukovitch's impeachment, voiding the agreement.

Ukraine always represented a red line for Russia; therefore, it decided to act to preserve its regional interests. First, and most important, its military interests. Crimea has been the base of the Russian Black Sea fleet for more than 250 years. An anti-Russian government could cancel the agreement which permits Russia to have military bases there. Second, because it considers Crimea's becoming a part of Ukraine in 1954 a mistake, since it has always been a part of Russia. Third, to give a clear message to the West that the Ukrainian issue is a real red line and it should remain in the Russian sphere of influence. Fourth, to show that Russia is to be respected and considered to be of a similar stature to the United States. It does not want to be integrated into the West, but to be an independent actor. Fifth, to divert public attention from Russia's own internal social and economic problems. However, this is only effective in the short-run. Although Putin's popularity has been increasing since the occupation of Crimea, it is to be expected that Russia's structural problems, combined with the economic sanctions, will make it decline again soon. Sixth, to make clear that any attempt to split off from the Russian Federation will not be tolerated.

Russia's Campaign in Ukraine as New-Generation Warfare

Russia's military strategy can be divided into three interrelated levels. First, doctrinal unilateralism, or the idea that the successful use of force results in legitimacy. The weak reaction of the United States and the European Union has indicated that the strategy is correct. Second, by strongly adhering to legalism. Without discussing the legal merit of Russian actions, they were all backed by some form of legal act. Putin asked the Russian parliament for authorization to use military power in the Ukraine if necessary. Naturally, it was granted. Russia uses this fact together with the argument that it never used military power in Crimea as a sign of its peaceful intentions. Third, Russia denies the idea of it having militarily occupied Crimea, since the troops there were local self-defense forces. In addition, that although it is true that the number of troops stationed there increased, this is still within the limits of the bilateral agreement between Russia and Ukraine.

Third, Russia obviously supported the referendum promoted by Crimean pro-Russian political forces, who were trying to legitimize Crimea's incorporation. It argues that this is a case of self-determination similar to Kosovo. The West considers the referendum to be illegitimate, first, because it violates the constitution of the Ukraine; second, because it was organized in such haste that there was no option in the ballot paper for voting for Crimea to remain part of the Ukraine. Russia considers this to be merely legal cynicism, and argues that the West considers some events to be legitimate, but others to be illegitimate, despite being of the same nature, according to whether it's in its own interests or not. Russia has also been arguing that its actions are the result of its commitment to defend the Ukraine's territorial integrity in accordance with the many international agreements signed during the 1990s.

The Crimean campaign has been an impressive demonstration of strategic communication, one which shares many similarities with their intervention in South Ossetia and Abkhazia in 2008, while at the same time being essentially different, since it reflects the operational realization of the new military guidelines to be implemented by 2020. Its success can be measured by the fact that in just three weeks, and without a shot being fired, the morale of the Ukrainian military was broken and all of their 190 bases had surrendered. Instead of relying on a mass deployment of tanks and artillery, the Crimean campaign deployed less than 10,000 assault troops – mostly naval infantry, already stationed in Crimea, backed by a few battalions of airborne troops and Spetsnaz commandos – against 16,000 Ukrainian military personnel. In addition, the heaviest vehicle used was the wheeled BTR-80 armored personal carrier.⁷

Figure 1
Changes in the Character of Armed Conflict According to General Valery Gerasimov, Chief of the Russian General Staff

Traditional Military Methods	New Military Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Military action starts after strategic deployment (Declaration of War). - Frontal clashes between large units consisting mostly of ground units. - Defeat of manpower, firepower, taking control of regions and borders to gain territorial control. - Destruction of economic power and territorial annexation. - Combat operations on land, air and sea. - Management of troops by rigid hierarchy and governance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Military action starts by groups of troops during peacetime (war is not declared at all). - Non-contact clashes between highly maneuverable interspecific fighting groups. - Annihilation of the enemy's military and economic power by short-time precise strikes in strategic military and civilian infrastructure. - Massive use of high-precision weapons and special operations, robotics, and weapons that use new physical principles (direct-energy weapons – lasers, shortwave radiation, etc). - Use of armed civilians (4 civilians to 1 military). - Simultaneous strike on the enemy's units and facilities in all of the territory. - Simultaneous battle on land, air, sea, and in the informational space. - Use of asymmetric and indirect methods. - Management of troops in a unified informational sphere

Source: Герасимов, 2013.

After blocking Ukrainian troops in their bases, the Russians started the second operational phase, consisting of psychological warfare, intimidation, bribery, and internet/media propaganda to undermine resistance, thus avoiding the use of firepower. The operation was also characterized by the great discipline of the Russian troops, the display of new personnel

⁷ The BTR-80 is a Russian lightly armored amphibious vehicle with a collective chemical-biological-radiological (CBR) protective system, developed during the Soviet Union in the first half of the 1980s. It has a crew of three men, carrying a squad of seven troops.

equipment, body armor, and light wheeled armored vehicles. The result was a clear military victory on the battlefield by the operationalization of a well-orchestrated campaign of strategic communication, using clear political, psychological, and information strategies (Ripley & Jones, 2014), the fully operationalization of what Russian military thinkers call “New Generation Warfare”.

As a result, it follows that the main guidelines for developing Russian military capabilities by 2020 are:⁸

- i. From direct destruction to direct influence;
- ii. from direct annihilation of the opponent to its inner decay;
- iii. from a war with weapons and technology to a culture war;
- iv. from a war with conventional forces to specially prepared forces and commercial irregular groupings;
- v. from the traditional (3D) battleground to information/psychological warfare and war of perceptions;
- vi. from direct clash to contactless war;
- vii. from a superficial and compartmented war to a total war, including the enemy’s internal side and base;
- viii. from war in the physical environment to a war in the human consciousness and in cyberspace;
- ix. from symmetric to asymmetric warfare by a combination of political, economic, information, technological, and ecological campaigns;
- x. From war in a defined period of time to a state of permanent war as the natural condition in national life.

Thus, the Russian view of modern warfare is based on the idea that the main battlespace is the mind and, as a result, new-generation wars are to be dominated by information and psychological warfare, in order to achieve superiority in troops and weapons control, morally and psychologically depressing the enemy’s armed forces personnel and civil population. The main objective is to reduce the necessity for deploying hard military power to the minimum necessary, making the opponent’s military and civil population support the attacker to the detriment of their own government and country. It is interesting to note the notion of permanent war, since it denotes a permanent enemy. In the current geopolitical structure, the clear enemy is Western civilization, its values, culture, political system, and ideology.

⁸ Adapted from Peter Mattsson’s DSPC lecture in Riga “The Russian Armed Forces Adapted to New Operational Concepts in a Multipolar World?”, February 19, 2014.

The phases of new-generation war can be schematized as (Tchekinov & Bogdanov, 2013, pp. 15-22):

First Phase: non-military asymmetric warfare (encompassing information, moral, psychological, ideological, diplomatic, and economic measures as part of a plan to establish a favorable political, economic, and military setup).

Second Phase: special operations to mislead political and military leaders by coordinated measures carried out by diplomatic channels, media, and top government and military agencies by leaking false data, orders, directives, and instructions.

Third Phase: intimidation, deceiving, and bribing government and military officers, with the objective of making them abandon their service duties.

Fourth Phase: destabilizing propaganda to increase discontent among the population, boosted by the arrival of Russian bands of militants, escalating subversion.

Fifth Phase: establishment of no-fly zones over the country to be attacked, imposition of blockades, and extensive use of private military companies in close cooperation with armed opposition units.

Sixth Phase: commencement of military action, immediately preceded by large-scale reconnaissance and subversive missions. All types, forms, methods, and forces, including special operations forces, space, radio, radio engineering, electronic, diplomatic, and secret service intelligence, and industrial espionage.

Seventh Phase: combination of targeted information operation, electronic warfare operation, aerospace operation, continuous airforce harassment, combined with the use of high-precision weapons launched from various platforms (long-range artillery, and weapons based on new physical principles, including microwaves, radiation, non-lethal biological weapons).

Eighth Phase: roll over the remaining points of resistance and destroy surviving enemy units by special operations conducted by reconnaissance units to spot which enemy units have survived and transmit their coordinates to the attacker's missile and artillery units; fire barrages to annihilate the defender's resisting army units by effective advanced weapons; air-drop operations to surround points of resistance; and territory mopping-up operations by ground troops.

In other words, the Russians have placed the idea of influence at the very center of their operational planning and used all possible levers to achieve this: skillful internal communications; deception operations; psychological operations and well-constructed external communications. Crucially, they have demonstrated an innate understanding of the three key target audiences and their probably behavior: the Russian speaking majority in Crimea; the Ukrainian government; the international community, specifically NATO and the EU. Armed with this information they knew what to do, when and what the outcomes were likely to be,

demonstrating that that the ancient Soviet art of reflexive control is alive and well in the Kremlin.⁹

This is very relevant to understanding its strategic significance, since it is the operationalization of a new form of warfare that cannot be characterized as a military campaign in the classic sense of the term. The invisible military occupation cannot be considered an occupation by definition. Not only were the troops already on Crimean territory stationed at Russian naval bases, but they were also “officially” part of the autochthone civilian militia. The deception operations occurred inside Russian territory as military exercises, including ones in Kaliningrad to increase the insecurity of the Baltic States and Poland. At the same time, the Crimean parliament officially - although not legally by the Ukrainian constitution - asked to join the Russian Federation, and the Ukrainian media became inaccessible. As a result, Russian channels of communication propagating the Kremlin’s version of facts were able to establish a parallel material reality, legitimizing the Russian actions in the realm of ideas.

Implications for Latvian Defense Policy

Russia considers the Baltic States to be part of its inherent sphere of influence. That is why Latvia needs to develop a more comprehensive long-term national security strategy. Many outside the defense sector have been simplifying Latvia’s defense down to NATO forces being deployed to guarantee Latvia’s sovereignty. Indeed, it is true that, in the case of a frontal military attack, the Ministry of Defense and the National Armed Forces are prepared to act accordingly. However, following the notion of permanent war and subsequent phases of warfare being implemented only when previous phases have achieved concrete results, a crude frontal military attack on Latvian territory is improbable.

The implication for Latvia is that the biggest challenge to its security and defense is Russia’s operationalization of the first and second phase of New-Generation Warfare, since their success determines the implementation of the following phases. Russia’s actions include issuing Russian passports to non-citizens, supporting pseudo human-rights movements, backing the organization of a referendum for Russian to be the second official language in Latvia, surveying the population of the Eastern border to get intelligence on their inclination to support a scenario similar to Ukraine in Latvia,¹⁰ just to cite a few. Plus, in a more subtle way, Russia has been successfully influencing internal politics through some of the political parties. Since the possibility of Russia escalating its operations in Latvia is dependent on the success of the first phases of warfare, and since the National Armed Forces have no mandate to intervene in internal affairs, it is the responsibility of other institutions to guarantee that a situa-

⁹ Reflexive control can be defined as “(...) a means of conveying to a partner or an opponent specially prepared information to incline him to voluntarily make the predetermined decision desired by the initiator of the action” (Thomas, 2004). For a comprehensive analysis of the Russian and Chinese achievements in this area, see Tatham, 2013.

¹⁰ See <http://www.apollo.lv/zinas/gluzi-ka-krima-krievijas-dienesti-slepus-peta-latvijas-iedzivotaju-noskanojumu/646732>.

tion similar to Ukraine does not occur in Latvia. This seems to be a difficult task, since Latvia lacks a comprehensive plan for counter-reacting and containing increasing Russian influence by the smart power instruments of New-Generation warfare that, in a worst case scenario, can result in developments similar to those seen in Crimea.

The first point to be taken in consideration is that NATO's Article 5 states that the "(P)arties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all". Since the Crimean operation was not an armed attack, but the operationalization of new forms of warfare, the question is, to what extent is NATO's legal framework ready to deal with modern warfare? This has deep implications for Latvia's defense strategy. First, and most important, because Russia has been targeting Latvia and its neighbors Estonia and Lithuania with a massive strategic communication campaign that includes, but is not limited to, information, psychological, and deception operations with the support of reflexive control.¹¹

As this is a non-traditional form of combat just recently being operationalized on such a scale, a fair question is whether NATO's own legal framework and instruments are ready to deal with it. Second, because it leaves open the possibility for doubt. Supposing a Crimea-like situation occurs in Narva, Estonia, for example. Can Article 5 be called on if there is no armed attack, but instead, what Russia would call a "democratic right of self-determination of the same nature as Kosovo and Crimea"? How should this issue be managed: militarily or politically? Certainly, politicians will be able to justify both. Since politics is not moral but pragmatic, if the Washington Treaty remains as it is, Latvia faces the risk of NATO's military forces being willing to fight for Latvia, but being unable to because of politicians.

Economic interests are more important to some politicians than moral issues. One example is a document from the United Kingdom's government stating that there should not be trade and financial sanctions against Russia so as not to harm the City of London.¹² Indeed, after the international uproar, which included the calling of David Cameron a politician with the morality of a hedge fund, the United Kingdom declared it was ready to hurt the interests of its financial sector if necessary.¹³ But the result, as Henry Kissinger put it, is that the "European Union must recognize that its bureaucratic dilatoriness and subordination of its strategic element to domestic politics in negotiating Ukraine's relationship with Europe, contributed to

¹¹ Strategic Communication is not simply using propaganda to operationalize information operations. It is a much more complex instrument. See Tatham, S. & Le Page, R. (2014). *NATO Strategic Communication: More to be Done?* Riga: CSSR, Policy Paper no. 1, available at <http://www.naa.mil.lv/~media/NAA/AZPC/DSPC%20PP%201%20-%20NATO%20StratCom.ashx>. Reflexive control" can be defined as a means of conveying to a partner or an opponent specially prepared information making him "voluntarily" take the pre-determined decision desired by the initiator of the action.

¹² See "UK seeking to ensure Russia sanctions do not harm City of London", available at <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/03/uk-seeks-russia-harm-city-london-document>.

¹³ See "London's Laundry Business", available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/08/opinion/londons-laundry-business.html>.

the transformation of a negotiation into a crisis. Foreign policy is the art of establishing priorities".¹⁴ This led to another question.

If an operation similar to Crimea occurs in one of the Baltic countries, one that is not a clear armed military attack, to what extent will economic interests be, or not be, stronger than the duty to protect the territorial integrity of small peripheral countries? In this case, the only alternative for Latvia is for the National Armed Forces to provoke an armed attack, making it clear that Article 5 has to be implemented. This scenario must be avoided by all means. Latvia should engage in diplomatic efforts with Estonia and Lithuania to change the Washington Treaty, especially Article 5, to reflect the challenges associated with 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th generation warfare, thus taking away the space for political maneuver.¹⁵

Second, it is necessary to establish, at the governmental level, the notion that Latvia's national security has to be part of the process of decision making. It is imperative to consider the essence and consequence of decisions instead of merely following formal bureaucratic procedures.¹⁶ Third, Latvia's integration policy should be strategically redefined, without jeopardizing its objectives. If it has been successful in many aspects, it also has some problems. The most important is the division of society into Latvians and "Russian-speakers." Since language is a strong factor determining one's cultural identity, the result is that many ethnic groups are now culturally closer to Russia than to Latvia or to their real heritage. This is the case with many Poles, Byelorussians, Ukrainians, Tartars, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, and others, who make up approximately 13% of Latvia's population.

Since these countries have their own political issues with Russia, the Latvian government should stimulate ethnic division between Russian-speakers by increasing their cultural self-awareness, thus making them proud of their real heritage. A concomitant step should be to apply the same strategy to the ethnic groups that supposedly form the Russian nation, in other words, Bashkirs, Chuvashs, Chechens, Mordvins, Kazakhs and Avars, just to name a few. It is important to establish policies to increase their awareness of being unique, and thus not part of the Russian nation. This can be done by supporting the development of ethnic communities, helping to preserve their culture, language, and history. The expected effects are

¹⁴ See "How the Ukraine crisis ends", available at http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/henry-kissinger-to-settle-the-ukraine-crisis-start-at-the-end/2014/03/05/46dad868-a496-11e3-8466-d34c451760b9_story.html.

¹⁵ Although the metaphor of generational evolution of war is flawed, the concept is useful to conceptualize different forms of warfare. Making a huge simplification to help those not familiar with the terms, the keywords to understand each "generation" are: non-state actors (4th), no contact (drones) (5th), cyber (6th), information warfare/strategic communication (7th).

¹⁶ The case of Vladimirs Lindermanis is a good example. He was jailed in Russia. The Latvian prosecutor office asked for his extradition twice, since the first one was denied by Russia. A considerable diplomatic effort was made, and finally Russia agreed to extradite him to Latvia in March 2008. In August of the same year he was free. This man, who Russia was not willing to extradite to Latvia, made huge efforts to organize the 2011 referendum about the Russian language's status in Latvia and in 2012 proposed a referendum for the region of Latgale to become autonomous. Thus such sensitive questions clearly need to be considered, not only according to formal bureaucratic procedures, but also the strategic interests of Latvia's national security.

two. First, the mitigation of Russia's sphere of cultural influence, at the same time reducing the number of people the Kremlin is tempted to protect in Latvian territory. Second, this policy would be a good response to the argument about Latvia ignoring minorities' rights.

Fourth, an increase in support for regional development is urgent. It is true that Latvia's economic policy has resulted in many achievements, including the adoption of the euro at the beginning of this year. However, it cannot be denied that economic development is mostly concentrated in the Riga region. The rest of the country suffers chronic underdevelopment. Academic literature shows that the feeling of economic insecurity is connected with a reduced loyalty to the nation.¹⁷ In other words, the low level of economic development certainly increases Russian influence in the Latvian countryside. Thus, an effective and pragmatic policy to promote regional development is urgent and should be considered a matter of national security. At the same time, Latvia needs to complement its national development policy. Since independence, it has been focusing on developing the financial, transit, and real estate sectors.¹⁸ As a result, although these sectors developed quite well, agriculture, manufacturing, research and development, just to cite the most important, did not. There are three problems. First, the finance and real estate sector are structurally unstable; second, they do not pay as much tax as the real sector; third, in the case of a systemic economic crisis, their losses are usually compensated with public money, including reducing the defense budget. At the same time, the real sector is much more stable and prone to paying taxes. This explains why developing an economy based on the real sector, and not only on banking and real estate, is a matter of national security.

Fifth, the security structure of the Ministry of Interior needs to be prepared to deal with the first five phases of warfare. That is why it is necessary to fully evaluate its capabilities in the fields of intelligence, counterintelligence, prevention, anticipation, repression, and neutralization, establishing a plan of development and reform. The problems of the security forces, subordinate to the Minister for the Interior, are well known and have been discussed in the media, and are therefore not discussed in this paper. However, one question which cannot be ignored is the possibility of pro-Russia subversive elements inside the security forces. This issue must be constantly evaluated, since internal sabotage could have a critical role in facilitating the enemy's operation.

Sixth, it is necessary to develop the National Armed Forces' operational capabilities to deal with new-generation warfare. The first step is obvious: an increase in the defense budget, preferably to more than 2% of the GDP. This is necessary because, obviously, is expensive to develop an effective defense system able to deter enemy forces until NATO allies are able to

¹⁷ See Hirschmann, A. O. (1970). *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

¹⁸ See Bērziņš, J. (2014). *Ideological Convergence and Macroeconomic Policy in Latvia*. Unpublished. Submitted for publication to the *European Political Science Review*.

react. The second step is the establishment of a more comprehensive defense plan, taking into consideration the challenges posed by new forms of warfare. Supposing a scenario similar to Crimea were to happen in Latvia. The National Armed Forces would be unable to act to protect Latvia's territorial integrity. The problem in this case is dual. On the one hand, it does not have a mandate to intervene in internal affairs. Since the Crimean operation was, officially, carried out by local militias, it would be the police's responsibility to take any action. On the other hand, the National Armed Forces need to include the challenges of 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th generation of warfare in its doctrine, as a first step to developing proper operational capabilities. The third step is to subordinate all matters of national security and defense to a central coordination agency. This does not mean amalgamating the ministries of defense and the interior. Rather, this means subordinating the coordination of all national bodies of executive power to the Ministry of Defense and the National Armed Forces' General Staff in matters of defense and national security.

The fourth step is to establish a new model of conscription to form trained, thus battle capable, reservists. Latvia is too small to give up conscription, although, since the National Armed Forces are now more professional, it does not make sense to revert back to the traditional conscription model. Instead, conscription should be understood as a period of basic, but intense military training, to form reservists to be part of the *Zemessardze*. This initial period would preferably take place during the last two years of high school, partially substituting for physical education. After this initial period, reservists should take part in mandatory annual exercises until the age of 45 or, depending on the educational level, until the age of 55. The idea is to follow a mix between the Finnish, the Swiss, and the Israeli model, with every Latvian citizen being a soldier, ready to defend his/her country. The idea of extending conscription to women should also be considered.

The fifth step is to change Latvian legislation to increase the autonomy of commanders to decide when to respond to an attack. With the current legislation, the President and the Saeima (Parliament) need to issue an order. The main problem is that, since communications can be blocked, the orders to react may be issued, but never reach the high command and/or field commanders. In addition, taking into consideration that a quick reaction is fundamental, if the Saeima takes too long in reaching a political compromise to authorize a counter-reaction, or the President is hesitant, it could be too late. That is why a mix between the Estonian and Lithuanian model, one with the idea of total and unconditional defense, should be considered. This means assuring that each citizen has the right to resist the aggressor, including by military defense, guerrilla warfare, civil disobedience, non-collaboration, and other means. In the event of aggression, commanders of the armed forces should also be free to immediately issue orders to commence armed resistance, without waiting for a special political decision.

Finally, an increase in the mandate of the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces to coordinate Latvia's security and defense is urgent. The idea that the Armed Forces' role

should be limited to a (suicide) battalion ready to die, with the objective of making a foreign attack "official", as discussed in the media, is the first step to defeat.¹⁹ This thinking not only presupposes 3rd generation/conventional warfare, but is wrong in its essence. Thus, instead of a battalion of suicides, a continuing increase in operational capabilities is needed. Since there are economies of scale in the military sector as well, the Baltic countries have an urgent need to review their common defense policy, establishing an integrated approach on a variety of matters, in the civil, political, and military field, including integrating intelligence agencies and establishing a well-trained counterintelligence for active and effective intervention in the field of prevention, anticipation, repression, neutralization.

Final Remarks

The probability of a frontal direct military attack from Russia on Latvia is very small. Instead, a Russian attack to Latvia would probably follow the first five phases, as discussed before, since they do not give ground for invoking NATO's Article 5. As a result, direct occupation following traditional warfare methods is not very probable. Rather, Russia would like to split Latvia and take part of its territory, in the same way as it is doing in Ukraine. To achieve this objective, it will most probably not go beyond the fifth phase of new-generation warfare. The first phase, the one of non-military asymmetric warfare encompassing information, moral, psychological, ideological, diplomatic, and economic measures, as part of a plan to establish a favorable political, economic, and military setup for the next phase is already happening. This includes creating discontent among the Latvian population with national institutions, using the question of Russian as an official language, citizenship, the poor level of social and economic development in border regions, just to name a few.

The second phase is the realization of a special operation to mislead Latvia's political and military leaders by coordinated measures carried out by diplomatic channels, media, and top government and military agencies by leaking false data, orders, directives, and instructions. The third phase is intimidation, deception, and the bribing of government and military officers, with the objective of making them abandon their service duties. The fourth phase is to increase instability among the population by the arrival of Russian bands of militants, escalating subversion, not only in Latgale, but in the border regions of Vidzeme. The next and final phase would evolve to the imposition of blockades, and extensive use of private military companies in close cooperation with local armed opposition units.

The biggest challenge for Latvia's security and defense is its unpreparedness to deal with such a scenario, as a result of the simplification of Latvia's defense strategy, by many outside the Ministry of Defense and the National Armed Forces, to 3rd generation military deterrence. Although there should be no doubt that the Ministry of Defense and the National

¹⁹ See <http://www.delfi.lv/news/comment/comment/atis-klimovics-laiks-kompetenti-runat-par-aisardzibu.d?id=44362083#ixzz2xqEEGsGL>.

Armed Forces are ready to act, since national security requires a multilevel approach, it is necessary to develop a comprehensive defense plan at the national level.

Russia has been aggressively pursuing a mix of the strategies characteristic to the first phase of new-generation warfare, including the one of non-military asymmetric warfare in Latvia. Some examples include the broadcasting of Russian propaganda channels, issuing Russian citizenship to Latvia's non-citizens, pseudo human-rights movements, pro-Russian political parties, just to cite the most blatant. Since Russia's strategy is opportunistic, reflecting the notion discussed before, that any campaign is to be pursued only in the case of certain victory, it will not initiate the second, third, and fourth phase unless favorable conditions are clear. The establishment of such favorable conditions is very much the responsibility of Latvia itself. Many will correctly claim that this is obvious. But, is it? If so, why is so difficult for us to take measures to counteract Russia's measures towards establishing the favorable conditions that can lead to the next phase? As the popular saying goes, "it's no use crying over spilt milk."

References

- Bērziņš, J. (2014). *Ideological Convergence and Macroeconomic Policy in Latvia*. Unpublished, submitted for publication to the European Political Science Review.
- Cohen, A. (2013, September 13) Russia is Back. *The National Interest*, Available at <http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/russia-back-9077>.
- Hirschmann, A. O. (1970). *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Kissinger, H. (2014, March 6). How the Ukraine crisis ends. *The Washington Post*, March 6, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/henry-kissinger-to-settle-the-ukraine-crisis-start-at-the-end/2014/03/05/46dad868-a496-11e3-8466-d34c451760b9_story.html.
- Ripley, T. & Jones, B. (2014, April 2). Analysis: How Russia Annexed Crimea. *IHS Jane's Defense Weekly*, vol. 51, issue 14, p. 5.
- Tatham, S. (2013). *U.S. Governmental Information Operations and Strategic Communications: a Discredited Tool or User Failure? Implications for Future Conflict*. Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press.
- Thomas, T. L. (2004). Russia's Reflexive Control Theory and the Military. *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 237-256.
- Герасимов, В. (2013, 27 февраля). Необходимо переосмыслить формы и способы ведения боевых действий. *Военно-промышленный курьер*, no. 8 (476), available at <http://www.vpk-news.ru/articles/14632>.
- Чекинов, С. Г., Богданов С. А. (2013) О характере и содержании войны нового поколения. *Военная мысль*, no. 10, Библиогр. в сносках, ISSN 0236-2058, pp. 13-24.

Policy Paper n^o 02

April 2014

The views expressed here are solely those of the authors in their private capacity and do not in any way represent the views of the Latvian National Armed Forces, the Ministry of Defence of Latvia, or any other entity of the Latvian government.

National Defence Academy of Latvia
Center for Security and Strategic Research
Ezermalas 8, Riga, Latvia, LV-1014
Phone: +371 6707-6881 Fax: +371 6707-6888
<http://www.naa.mil.lv>