

19 Apr 23



Total defence

Scope

1

The basis of total defence

2

A bit of theory

3

Developing a strategy for resilience in the presence of foreign armed forces

4

Total defence as a strategy: choose your level of skill and courage

5

What would this look like for Belgium?



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■ The basis of resilience is a good social contract

1

Socio-political institutions are brittle when territorial control is lost.

2

The most resilient individuals are self-reliant and do not have a default pro-government attitude.

3

Societal resilience in the presence of foreign armed forces requires a force to unify resilient individuals.

4

A good social contract can be that force.

5

A strategy of total defence can prepare for this, but only if the threat is real and recognized.

Both the basis and the strategy are needed.



DEFENCE

■ The basis of resilience is a good social contract



A whole-of-society effort: Society needs to be such that it is worth defending, even in the presence of foreign armed forces.



DEFENCE

When a good social contract is lacking, create or promise one.

1

The presence of foreign armed forces lets grassroots movements out of the bottle. These movements will not restore, but transform the social contract.



Hundreds of Thousands Make Shiite Pilgrimage to Karbala

Nation Apr 22, 2003 12:25 PM EDT

Although the pilgrimage was made possible by the U.S.-led ouster of Saddam, some pilgrims marched with anti-American signs and called on the Americans to leave their country.



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A bit of theory



1

Thucydides: The strong do as they please and the weak suffer what they must.

2

Defeat can be a mechanism to preserve social cohesion under another regime.

3

Throughout most of history, refusing defeat led to dull misery.

4

Resilience in the presence of foreign armed forces became possible somewhere in the 19th century as a result of mass production of easy-to-use small arms.

5

However, creating a successful strategy for conflictual co-existence is a challenge.



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A bit of theory: The franc-tireur



”Was wir in einem halben Jahre mit den Waffen in der Hand errungen haben, das mögen wir ein halbes Jahrhundert mit den Waffen schützen, damit es uns nicht wieder entrissen wird. Wir haben seit unseren glücklichen Kriegen an Achtung überall, an Liebe nirgends gewonnen.,,
Helmuth Karl Bernhard Von Moltke, Reichstag 16 Feb 1874

”What we have won with arms in hand in half a year, we must protect with arms for half a century, so that it is not snatched away from us again. Since our happy wars we have won respect everywhere but love nowhere.,,
Helmuth Karl Bernhard Von Moltke, Reichstag 16 Feb 1874



Total Defence as a strategy: choose your level of skill and courage in the face of a real and recognized threat

1

Defence of strategic territory

2

Small unit tactics: raids and ambushes (12 WE) Behind enemy lines

3

Sabotage of supply lines (6 WE)

4

Providing information, logistic storage, safe houses

5

Medical care

6

Child care



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What would this look like for Belgium?

1

Presence of adversary foreign armed forces highly unlikely

2

Presence of allied foreign armed forces guaranteed (is also a stress to resilience).

3

Focus total defence strategy on the enablement of the allied foreign armed forces.



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Resilience in the presence of foreign
armed forces

■ Presence of foreign armed forces in Belgium

1

Highest concentration of logistic hubs in Europe

2

Asset as well as a responsibility



Capability requirements for enablement

1

Port/Rail operation units

2

Staging area support

3

Field accommodation

4

Expedient repair

5

Stockpiling and warehousing



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Who could/should do the job?

1

Military

2

Reserve

3

Governmental

4

Commercial

5

National political decision



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■ In Sum

In sum

1

Countries facing a real and recognized threat to their territorial integrity prepare for resilience in the presence of adversary foreign armed forces. The aim is to guarantee the restoration of constitutional order even after a prolonged foreign military presence.

2

A good and solid social contract should be the basis for this resilience to unify resilient individuals after the collapse of national socio-political institutions.

3

Countries not facing a real and recognized threat to their territorial integrity should focus their preparation efforts on the presence of allied foreign armed forces and on ways to enable them.



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