



SUBVERSION

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Introduction:

- It is an important instrument of foreign policy.
- It includes techniques short of war which is employed to overthrow a legally constituted government.
- Subversion is directed at weakening a state which is an enemy.
- Though it is immoral, it has been being practiced from the ancient periods.
- It has been put to use by both totalitarian and democratic states.

Meaning & definitions:

- Some important definition of subversion are as follows –
- “Subversion is the utilization of a group allegedly loyal to the interests & values of one community but actually furthering the policy of a rival nation.”- Haas and Whiting
- “The term subversion has characterized any rebellious activity in a country but distinguishing feature of subversion is that it is organized, supported or directed by a foreign power, using for its own purposes the disaffected elements in a society.

Nature of Subversion:

- It is used as an instrument of national policy.
- It is of a recent innovation in the conduct of relation between states.
- Subversion may include propaganda to confuse and divide.
- It may also include the support of minority groups and 'fifth column' agents to disrupt the normal process of the enemy state.
- The encouragement of revolt to overthrow the existing government.
- The use of sabotage to wreck industry and transport.
- Resort to assassination to remove the key leaders & to create anarchy & chaos.

Nature

1. Subversion includes a communicator and a target group in foreign countries. In addition, it also includes participation by a third group who are the nationals of the target country.
2. It is the systematic campaign to help an indigenous rebel group to seize power.
3. It also involves subversive activities in the enemy country.
4. Conflict of ideologies encourage the transfer of loyalty of the citizens of a state to another state with whose ideology they sympathize and concur.

Nature

5. Subversive groups are regarded as the 'fifth column' and attempt at overthrow the established government.
6. Subversion is not of a recent origin in the conduct of relation between states. The strategy of the Trojan horse has been practiced throughout history.

Techniques/Devices of Subversion:

- Majority of the techniques or devices of subversion are immoral & unethical. Some of its techniques are as follows –
 1. Systematic **propaganda may be used** to confuse, divide and demoralize the people of the target country.
 2. Assistance or **support may be given to minority groups/fifth column** agents to disrupt the normal processes of the target country.
 3. **Bribing the high ranking officials** of the enemy side and use them for espionage.

Devices of subversion

4. Trying to **create internal disturbances** in the rank and file of enemies by wooing minority in the target country.
5. **Training a band of spies** and sending them into the target countries to **carry on espionage**.
6. **Bribing opposition parties** in the enemy countries and provoking them to rise in rebellion against the enemy government by helping them by money and weapons.

Devices

7. Use of **sabotage to wreck enemy transport, industry** and communication.
8. Using many **techniques to breakdown the morale of the people** in the enemy country.
9. The techniques include even the **planning that is done to kill the leaders of the enemy country.**

Conclusion:

- Subversions during the world wars were important supplements to the military efforts.
- Subversions usually operates in the twilight zone between diplomacy and war.
- World public opinion especially in democratic countries is not in favour of it but the totalitarian states thrive in the use of these techniques.
- But it is the mass media which exerts some kind of restraint on subversion as a technique of political warfare.