

Toward a New Counterinsurgency: Philippines, Laos, and Vietnam

The Philippines' counterinsurgency campaign that followed the Huk move to open revolt in 1946 was known as President Roxas's "mailed fist" or "iron fist" policy (the CIA would later describe it as a policy of "gradual extermination"). The full force of the army, the Constabulary and the civilian guards was thrown against the Huk forces when they could be found, and, more frequently, against the peasant communities associated with them. Villages were mortared, shelled, and burned, suspects were rounded up and shot.¹ The repression was largely carried out on traditional punitive lines, and in *many* areas it was considered worse than the Japanese occupation. Some of the counterinsurgency measures were the same as those used by the Japanese, including the *zona* and the "magic eye" (identification by a hooded informant).² Population movement was severely restricted by means of passes issued, for a fee, by mayors and provincial authorities, with imprisonment, beatings, or even death as punishment for traveling without one.³

By 1948 the net effect of the Roxas government's "iron fist" campaign was a Huk movement that probably more than doubled in size, though retaining its local orientation and limited objectives. The death of President Roxas on 14 April 1948 (from natural causes) and the accession to power of Vice President Elpidio Quirino led, for a few months, to negotiations between HMB leaders and the new president, and to good prospects for a peaceful solution to the conflict.⁴ The brief truce, which had never been fully effective,, ended when an amnesty period ran out. In some areas, PKM and HMB members who had presented themselves to local authorities were beaten, had their arms confiscated, or were killed; in others, Constabulary and civilian guards had continued attacking villages and seeking out subversives as usual.

The Huk Rebellion reached its high point between 1949 and early 1951, with 11,000 to 15,000 men and women in arms. The Huk combatants were organized into Field Commands (FCs) ranging from 100 to 700 guerrillas, with FC headquarters located in mountain and swamp areas and each force covering its own local area. As with the wartime Hukbalahap, the HMB moved in small groups in and out of the peasant communities of the area, and depended on "barrio organizers" for political and material support, although a complex regional infrastructure was established.⁵ The heartland

of the HMB movement remained the four central provinces of Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac, and Bulacan, although the organization had extended to areas of Nueva Vizcaya and parts of Pangasinan, Laguna, Bataan, and Quezon. Even in the central Luzon heartland, Huk military operations remained essentially defensive, a resistance movement against overwhelming external force. Huk forces carried out ambushes, raided outposts, cut roads, and "confiscated" funds and property to sustain the movement; they neither held nor sought to hold territory, and there was never any question of liberated zones.⁶

The stubbornly local nature of the movement, drawing on central Luzon's 1.5 million people (of the Philippines' 23 million), was only one of the reasons for its ultimate failure. The HMB movement's failure to evolve into a popular, national movement with clear objectives left it extremely vulnerable to both the aggressive, programmatic counterinsurgency initiated in 1950, as well as to highly publicized rural projects designed to undermine Huk support—including well-drilling, health clinics, military-backed courts to hear tenant-landlord disputes, and loans to peasant farmers. As in later American psy-war reform projects, from Vietnam to El Salvador, at least half of the funding for the rural development projects was provided by U.S. economic aid.⁷ The decline of the Huk movement began in earnest after 1951, as its peasant base gradually withdrew. The "official" end of the Huk Rebellion has been dated May 1954, when Huk leader Luis Taruc surrendered after talks with a presidential emissary, Benigno Aquino, Jr. (whose murder in 1983 would precipitate the long fall of Ferdinand Marcos), although as late as 1969 groups of Huk guerrillas continued to carry out assaults on government forces and the landed elites in many areas. The back—and heart—of the revolt, however, was broken in 1954.

In 1969, remnants of the HMB and a breakaway faction of the Communist Party came together to form a new, national guerrilla organization, the New People's Army (NPA). By then, the agrarian conditions that had motivated the Huk Rebellion in the 1940s and 1950s had worsened throughout much of the nation. The emergence in the 1960s of mass organizations of students, trade unionists, slum dwellers, and multisectoral political opposition groups in the capital and other urban areas provided new and powerful allies to the previously isolated peasants. The post-Huk revolt that sputtered and flared in the 1970s would emerge in the 1980s as a full-fledged revolutionary movement active throughout much of the national territory. The counterinsurgency methods in use today in the Philippines draw directly from both the experience of the 1950s and the later development of U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine and practice.

Although the influence of the Philippine Communist Party (PKP) on the rise of the HMB was relatively minor, and its later attempt to control the Huk

Rebellion proved ineffective, the role of the PKP stood out in the analysis of the U. S. military. Even though the agrarian roots of the conflict were recognized, the ideological viewpoint that categorized the Huks as communists dominated practical policy. Some early CIA and military reports provided a fairly measured assessment of the Huk movement, but by 1950 the view of the Huks as a phenomenon of the Cold War prevailed. A 16 January 1946 Military Intelligence (G-2) report presented a rather fair view of the economic background of the wartime Hukbalahap, observing that they lived in the Luzon Plain, an area in which "98% of the land is owned by 2% of the people," whereas "the majority of the people are tenant farmers who raise rice and pay 50% of their production in land rent."⁸ While attributing the strength of the movement to the agrarian situation, it suggested a gradual infiltration by leftist leaders:

During the occupation by the Japanese, the Japanese took 75% of the rice production in tax. This created an opportunity for patriots to organize guerrilla bands to fight the Japanese as a means of survival.... After the Hukbalahap movement became effective, certain liberals (with communistic leanings) decided to proclaim themselves as members of the Hukbalahap and use it as a means of political power.⁹

A March 1949 CIA situation report on the Huks attributed "lawlessness" primarily to "the presence of an historical and inequitable land-tenure system which results in a life of poverty for large masses of the peasantry."¹⁰ The CIA report also criticized the policy of naked repression as potentially counterproductive:

While government suppression campaigns continue with temporary local success, the Huks, whose armed strength is 8-10,000, are loosely organized and have sufficient allies both among brigands and among the discontented peasantry to be able to melt away and regroup.... [A]ny attack on the basic problem of agrarian discontent is frustrated by the wealthy landlord class' domination of the Government. There is some indication that government policy has now settled on a gradual extermination campaign against the Huks. In point of fact, such a policy would stiffen Huk resistance and allow further Communist exploitation of Huk grievances.¹¹

Major Edward Geary Lansdale made a more patently ideological analysis. In a 14 March 1946 cable he maintained that the leaders of the wartime Hukbalahap were all "true disciples of Karl Marx," hell-bent on revolution.¹² And, in a convoluted twist of logic that would become characteristic of U. S. policy, Lansdale maintained that the mass following of the Hukbalahap was won primarily through terror. Although Lansdale would later be known as a "thinking" counterinsurgent, aware of the injustices that promoted insurgency and anxious to see them righted, in classified documents he appears rather less sensitive and rather more paranoid vis- à-vis the Communist threat:

[I]n the provinces of Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Bulacan and Pangasinan, they are establishing or have established a reign of terror. So ironclad is their grip and so feared is

their power that the peasants dare not oppose them in many localities. Upon liberation, their members were about 50,000; sources IIOOW report some 150,000 tribute-paying members.... [The Hukbalahap] is now organized into trigger men, castor oil boys, and just big strong . . . ruffians to keep the more meek in line .¹³

The vehemence of Lansdale's official diatribes on the Huks contrasted somewhat with the record of his more private thoughts. In a personal journal kept during part of 1947 and 1948, he expressed more respect for the Huks, although he was still convinced of their "communist" domination:

Most of the Huks are now youngsters under twenty with "old men" in their early thirties as leaders. Most of them believe in the rightness of what they're doing, even though some of the leaders are on the communist side of politics. And, there is a bad situation, needing reform, which still exists in central Luzon. Agrarian reforms still seems to exist only on paper and I suppose armed complaint is a natural enough thing after the guerrilla heritage of most of these people.¹⁴

But for the official record, the Huks were commies and the job was to eliminate them.

American policymakers appear to have become alarmed over the Philippines security situation in the course of 1949, as the Huk movement grew in strength and Cold War anxiety rose over developments in Asia and the Pacific. In May 1950, a Joint Chiefs of Staff study advised the Secretary of Defense that the Philippine government's strength had "seriously declined" in the previous months and warned that the trend could lead to the "early collapse" of the pro-American government. American failure to react would "inevitably result" in the rise of a procommunist regime.¹⁵ A CIA situation report dated a month later was less histrionic, the predicted crisis less imminent: If the decline continued "for as much as ten years pro-Communist forces might be able to seize power."¹⁶ There was, however, agreement that American assistance was required to roll back the communist threat.

The preparations for Philippine independence in 1946 had included American assistance in organizing and equipping the Military Police Command (Constabulary) and a trimmed-down postwar military establishment. Insofar as threats to the Philippines' external or internal security were deemed minimal, American assistance was relatively low (it included a vast quantity of leftover war materials, of questionable utility, left behind for the Philippine army). The plan provided American arms and equipment for a 33,000-man army, with almost two-thirds of its strength (19,203) assigned to the Military Police Command.¹⁷ External defense was guaranteed by the United States, if only because of the strategic position of the Philippines and the numerous base facilities retained by treaty after independence. The Constabulary, nearly twice as large as the army and technically a reserve component of the armed forces, remained close to its

1946 level and carried out the bulk of government actions against the Huks.

¹⁸

Army intelligence personnel, notably officers of the U.S. Counter Intelligence Corps, worked from the immediate aftermath of the war to organize a Philippines military intelligence corps and began steps to establish a Philippines central intelligence organization in 1948. By January 1948, the welter of intelligence units included G-2 divisions of the army and the Constabulary, the Manila Police Secret Service, the Secret Service Agents of Malacañang, the Secret Service Agents of the Manila Harbor Police, the National Bureau of Investigation (modeled loosely on the FBI), and the Immigration Bureau. ¹⁹

In June 1950, American alarm over the Huk Rebellion prompted a presidential order for a program for the rapid reorganization and expansion of Philippine combat forces, funded by the diversion of \$9.3 million from other headings in Cold War aid allocations.²⁰ This emergency aid was in large part earmarked for the equipping and training of sixteen Battalion Combat Teams (BCTs); these highly mobile, semiautonomous, multipurpose command battalions, much like the *Groupement Mobile* devised by the French in Indochina (although lacking its armor and enormous firepower), were the means by which the war was to be taken to the insurgents.²¹

Special assistance rushed through in 1950 included the U.S.-directed reorganization of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) and the creation of a combat intelligence school.²² A second allocation of \$10 million was approved by President Truman on 9 May 1951 to permit the creation of ten more BCTs, bringing the total to twenty-six. Disbursement levels jumped from \$1.5 million in Fiscal Year 1950 to \$6.9 million in 1951 and \$11.2 million in 1952.²³ The combined army, navy, and air force personnel levels rose to 54,000 by 1953.²⁴ The combined army and Philippines Constabulary (PC) force level rose dramatically from 32,000 at the beginning of 1950 to 40,000 in 1951 and 56,000 in late 1952.²⁵ Air power, too, became increasingly important as U.S. assistance stepped up, with some 2,600 bombing and strafing runs reported between 1 August 1950 and 30 June 1952 alone (some sorties allegedly with support from U. S. planes out of Clark Air Force Base).²⁶ Requests for napalm were initially turned down on State Department advice, but from late 1951 American napalm was supplied and used both for crop destruction and antipersonnel purposes.²⁷ A record system devised for Philippine military intelligence, which traced all known supporters of the wartime Huk resistance movement, was operational by the end of 1950; according to one source, it was used in screening operations that resulted in some 15,000 arrests in the first six months of 1951.²⁸

There was also an important change in the largely conventional orientation of the Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG). An April 1950 embassy

report had criticized both the Philippine style of counterinsurgency and the orientation of JUSMAG in Manila.²⁹ The report, while warning that sending U. S. troops would be counterproductive, recommended the assignment to JUSMAG of "a substantial number of officers having actual experience in guerrilla and anti-guerrilla operations and particularly involving Communist led forces...." A special request was made for officers involved in "the recent operations in Greece."³⁰

The Joint Chiefs of Staff—whose chairman was then-General Omar Bradley—concurred, recommending an increase in JUSMAG strength to thirty-two officers and twenty-six enlisted men. They also agreed that U.S. troops were not called for; rather, "remedial political and economic measures" were required to remove the causes of the insurrection. In an early precedent for the 1960s Internal Defense and Development counterinsurgency programs, the Joint Chiefs urged the National Security Council (NSC) to approve "prompt and positive political and economic action to arrest and reverse the current political deterioration in the Philippines."³¹

The turning point in Philippine counterinsurgency has generally been identified as the appointment, on American advice, of former USAFFE guerrilla Ramón Magsaysay as Minister of National Defense in September 1950. Magsaysay had long been a rising star in Philippine politics and a protege of U.S. advisers. On the basis of his leadership of a USAFFE guerrilla group, Magsaysay was appointed military governor of Zambales by the U.S. Army in 1945. He was elected to Congress in 1946 and became head of the House Defense Committee. The first of his several visits to the United States, in 1948, for the purpose of obtaining veterans benefits for Filipinos, served to cement his personal relations with the American security establishment. In March 1950, Magsaysay again visited the United States, this time to seek increased military aid. As Secretary of Defense, Magsaysay presided over the reorganization of the Philippine security apparatus and a multifaceted counterinsurgency program, which would incorporate most of the elements of modern doctrine for the first time in an integrated manner.

The unconventional, "remedial political" dimension of the assistance program devised in early 1950 was to rest largely on the choice of Magsaysay as the right man for the Philippines, and on a few key "advisers" who adroitly managed Magsaysay's every move. The management task was handled by a small cadre within the JUSMAG, now headed by the recently promoted Air Force Lt. Col. Edward Geary Lansdale. Lansdale had returned to the Philippines in September 1950) to take control of the unconventional side of the counterinsurgency. He was also the chosen companion, personal adviser, and confidant of the United States choice for Defense Secretary, Ramón Magsaysay, who took office at about the time of Lansdale's arrival.

Lansdale became one of the most famous of the American counterinsurgents; later he was widely touted as the model for the protagonist not only of Eugene Burdick and William J. Lederer's novel *The Ugly American*, whose heroic Colonel Hillendale was both well-meaning and intelligent, but of Graham Greene's *The Quiet American* as well—the dangerously earnest, hopelessly blinkered Alden Pyle. Greene has denied Lansdale was Pyle's sole model, but Pyle's idealistic naïveté and self-centered insensitivity closely resemble the Lansdale style of saving the world for democracy. [Greene's character Fowler describes the Pyle/ Lansdale persona: "\[H\]e was as incapable of imagining pain or danger to himself as he was incapable of conceiving the pain he might cause others.... Yet he was sincere in his way; it was coincidence that the sacrifices were all paid by others."](#)³²

Born in 1908, Lansdale's career in government began, by his own account, with his recruitment to the OSS for wartime service, and his later commission as a U. S. Army lieutenant in 1943.³³ (Prior to the war, he had been an account executive and copywriter for a San Francisco advertising agency.) Lansdale was on the scene in the Philippines as the war ended, and from 1945 to 1948 headed the intelligence division of the Philippines (Ryukyus) Command, where he is credited in part with setting up the military's intelligence services.

On the public side of his Philippines posting, Lansdale was described as the Philippines-Ryukyus Command Public Information Officer. A flattering full-length article in the January 1948 *Philippine Armed Forces Journal* stresses Lansdale's "winning personality and the knack for winning friends," as well as his success in handling "the public relations job for the United States Army in the Islands." Given Lansdale's flair for self-promotion, the ironic style and hype of the article suggest he may have written the piece himself ("he first displayed his ability to get along with people by trouncing his Detroit elementary school classmates who tried to bully him and his brother . . .").³⁴

[In his 1972 memoirs, Lansdale describes the latitude he enjoyed in carrying out his mission:](#)

[My orders were plain. the United States government wanted me to give all help feasible to the Philippine government in stopping the attempt by the Communist-led Huks to overthrow that government by force. My help was to consist mainly of advice where needed and desired. It was up to me to figure out how best to do this.](#)³⁵

[A member of Lansdale's small advisory team, then-Captain Charles Bohannon, was considerably better versed in guerrilla warfare than was Lansdale and later co-authored one of the best studies of practical counterinsurgency of the time.](#)³⁶ "Bo" Bohannon had been one of the United States' crack anti-Japanese "guerrillas" in New Guinea and the Philippines

during World War II and had excelled as a counter guerrilla in the Philippines, Indochina, and Latin America.³⁷ After the war, he remained in the Philippines as an army counterintelligence officer.³⁸ When Ed Lansdale returned to the Philippines in 1950, Bohannon was a natural for the team he called "The Force."

Bo Bohannon continued to be associated with Lansdale in Vietnam (and apparently Laos) in the 1950s and 1960s, and like Lansdale, appeared in out-of-the-way places at rather critical moments. In the mid-1950s, Bohannon played a key role in organizing Filipino participation in other Pacific Cold War operations, including the formation (in a meeting in Saigon) of such Filipino-American initiatives as Operation BROTHERHOOD, the Freedom Company, and the Technical Services Company. He also worked out the plans for the training of Lansdale's Vietnamese paramilitary forces in the Philippines, at the Freedom Company facilities at Camp Batson, near Clark Air Force Base.³⁹ Lansdale's 1955 recommendation for Bohannon's promotion seems to confirm Bohannon's covert role in Vietnam and Laos as deputy commander of the covert "Saigon Military Mission" that Lansdale headed.⁴⁰

Although JUSMAG had been established in 1947 and charged with advising, organizing, and training the Philippine armed forces, few of its members were stationed in the field. Lansdale and Bohannon had been attached to a separate U.S. Army Command from 1945 to 1949 however, which had played an operational role, working closely with Filipino officers, "supposedly in the course of their duty collecting information for the United States. In actual fact, they were the only operation advisers the AFP had. " In 1950, according to Bohannon, Magsaysay requested the services of "two of these officers . . . as special advisers" (Bohannon does not indicate at whose suggestion).

The mission of Lansdale's new team is described as having been covert and with a virtually unlimited brief, "under a charter which said, in effect, that they could do almost anything as long as the Ambassador, the Chief of JUSMAG, and another US representative [perhaps the head of the CIA station?! did not object violently." The team was compact and stayed so:

[T]he senior of the party [Lansdale] acted as adviser on psy-ops [psychological operations] and everything else to the Secretary of National Defense, the other officer [Bohannon himself] acted as intelligence and unconventional warfare adviser to everybody in sight, and back-up man to the adviser to the Sec Def [Secretary of Defense]. To all intents and purpose this was the advisory team on the whole conduct of the successful counter-insurgency operation, although nobody but they, a few very high-ranking persons now retired, and a few hundred (or thousand) Filipinos knew this.⁴¹

Later, a third officer joined the team to act "as daily routine adviser to the psy-ops section."⁴² Lansdale later identified him as Army Captain A. C. "Ace" Ellis, a communications specialist.

"Didn't you ever have an American friend?" was a question that Lansdale, perhaps apocryphally, claimed once to have posed to a crowd in central Luzon.⁴³ Lansdale was Magsaysay's American friend. Lansdale—and the others to an extent—bunked with Magsaysay, ate with him, traveled with him on field inspections and operations, and held daily discussions with him—what Lansdale called "coffee klatches." Although on Lansdale's arrival Magsaysay was living at home with his family, within a week he was sharing Lansdale's room in the JUSMAG compound—the two men sleeping on army cots, in an arrangement that persisted for over a year.⁴⁴ Bohannon, in an unpublished paper, explained the team's operational method as total immersion, and their relation with Magsaysay, a rather peculiar blend of buddy-buddy camaraderie and cold-blooded manipulation:

How did they operate? By working, in one way or another all the time; by spending virtually (and this is literally true) a minimum of 20 hours a day with Filipinos . . . by poking their noses into everything, and trying to act it all working in the same direction.... By never leaving the key man alone except when he went to bed with his wife, until he was thoroughly indoctrinated.⁴⁵

The American team that took charge—with Magsaysay—of counterinsurgency in September 1950 operated in an unusual political space won from a president—Quirino—dependent on U.S. funds and political support. Bohannon later observed that Quirino was afraid of the American friends, and so let them and Magsaysay operate with an unusual autonomy. The political "assets" of the team, in Bohannon's view, were several.

- a. They were, or had been, officers of the US *Army*
- b. They knew, had worked and fought with hundreds of Filipinos, had gained their respect....
- c. They knew their business. . .
- d. They had top-level US backing stateside, and tolerance or cooperation from local US authorities. (Note well, this cannot be assumed in future situations, it must be mandatory [that] . . . top local US authorities . . . at least cooperate with such a team.)
- e. They were feared by the local chief of state, they had the full cooperation of the leader of the effort (the SecDef).
- f. They were ingenious, adaptable, rather unscrupulous bastards, and one, the senior, was a master salesman.⁴⁶

In November 1951, Magsaysay would be credited with using troops to guarantee the fairness of congressional elections. After the travesty of 1949, the apparent fairness of the polls—the opposition WOLL overwhelmingly—was later cited as a major psychological blow to the Huk insurgency. A National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL), established and funded

through U.S. assistance, worked closely with Magsaysay's Civil Affairs Office in promoting and supervising the election.

When Quirino opted to run for reelection in 1953, Magsaysay, although not associated with any party, was an obvious opponent, and promptly became the Nacionalista Party candidate. NAMFREL, headed by Jaime Ferrer—later Corazon Aquino's pro-"vigilante" Minister of Local Government—and other theoretically nonpartisan organizations for "good government" worked effectively for Magsaysay.⁴⁷ The military resources available were also considerable: Psy-war propaganda methods were used to promote Magsaysay. A Magsaysay-for-president movement was founded by Civil Affairs chief José Crisol (who, like Magsaysay, resigned for the duration of the campaign). The American role was critical throughout. A massive domestic and international publicity campaign pumped up Magsaysay's image and assured his election, orchestrated by his American friends in the inner chamber of the military advisory group.

In his own memoirs, Ed Lansdale denies having played a partisan role, or injecting funds into the elections.⁴⁸ Later accounts, notably Ray Bonner's *Waltzing with a Dictator*, cite documentary evidence on the extent of American intervention. In a 1972 interview, Lansdale himself recounts having been offered \$5 million by CIA chief Allen Dulles to arrange the election, and claims to have said he only needed \$1 million (a cash-filled suitcase was duly delivered). Lansdale later privately acknowledged having raised the principal funds necessary through "donations" from American corporations in the Philippines.⁴⁹ The "attraction" side of the election campaign was perhaps the less distasteful side of U. S. intervention. The "dirty tricks" side, though, according to the CIA Manila station chief, General Ralph B. Lovett, included an episode in which President Quirino was drugged before a speech "so that he would appear incoherent."⁵⁰

The outcome of the 1953 elections was not a foregone conclusion. A contemporary CIA report warned of the damage an openly fraudulent election would cause to American prestige in Asia, but it considered only Quirino as the potential fraudster. Preparations were also made by Magsaysay and his Nacionalista Party to dispute the election through force of arms if he lost:

Magsaysay's impressive popularity is universally acknowledged, and many Nacionalista leaders have convinced themselves that the party can be beaten only by chicanery. Magsaysay has told his followers to avoid violence but is alleged to have asked certain trusted aides to determine the number of armed men available in case of an emergency.⁵¹

The contingency plan—tank crews were apparently standing by for action—proved unnecessary. Magsaysay won more than two-thirds of the votes cast.

⁵² The election was a public-relations triumph.

Although Bohannon and Lansdale were unstinting in their public praise of Magsaysay's dynamism and leadership qualities in later years (they largely created Magsaysay's public image), their praise had patronizing undertones. Magsaysay was presented as the right man, the man who gets things done. The things being done, however, were those suggested by his American friends. In private and in the closed circles of the American military, Lansdale and Bohannon characterized Magsaysay as a superstitious, malleable pawn of their own creation.⁵³

The principal thrust of the new counterinsurgency was a combination of psy-war programs designed to win the support of the population with measures to annihilate Huks more efficiently. The psy-war effort, in which Colonel Lansdale played a major part, was threefold: aimed to influence the enemy, the public, and the armed forces themselves. A psychological warfare division—called the Civil Affairs Office (CAO)—was created under Magsaysay's direct control and was the vehicle for some of the more unusual American and Filipino initiatives in the counterinsurgency campaign.⁵⁴ terror played an important part in psychological operations.

The office was charged with a propaganda campaign to whip up sentiment against the Huks, which involved many of the ingredients present in the Philippines counterinsurgency today. The CAO funded student organizations and disseminated anti-Huk and anticommunist materials in schools, as well as through newspapers, leaflets, and public radio. Funds were also made available to employ or suborn independent journalists and radio announcers, while the U.S. Information Service (USIS) produced more than 13 million leaflets and other materials within two years. In the same period some 6,000 CAO-sponsored meetings were held.⁵⁵ The psy-war program also turned to organized religion as a medium. The Far Eastern Broadcasting Company, run by American evangelical missionaries, distributed to rural areas free radios manufactured to receive only their own broadcasts; the CAO arranged to leaven them with its own ideological messages.⁵⁶

The CAO structure also provided a mechanism through which Magsaysay and his advisers could influence armed forces in the field. Civil Affairs officers were attached to most units and held both advisory and supervisory functions. Lansdale, who in his memoirs claimed credit for the concepts of civil affairs and civic action cadre, compared their role with that of the political commissars of communist armies: They ensured that the political dimension of military operations was a permanent factor.⁵⁷

The main message of the new-look counterinsurgency was a variation of the colonial maxim "firm but fair." Magsaysay's slogan was "All out friendship or all-out force." Improving the behavior of troops and promising attention to essential grievances coincided with making the armed forces into a more efficient machine for the killing of Huks. A supply of candy and chewing gum

was issued to troops for distribution to children in potentially hostile communities; troops going in were on orders to appear as innocuous as possible. ("It was hard to persuade the children that the Santa Claus with the candy was an enemy. Eventually, this rubbed off on the older folks . . ." — and, in any case, "Troops surrounded by children are not likely to be attacked by a guerrilla...."⁵⁸) Magsaysay told troops their duties were first, "to act as an ambassador of good will from the government to the people; second, to kill or capture Huk."⁵⁹

There was a very real effort, with measurable effects, to clean up the behavior of counterinsurgency forces at the local level. Magsaysay was responsive to protests of abusive troop behavior (as distinguished from tactical brutality), and a remarkable public-relations effort—masterminded by Colonel Lansdale—was carried out, which enhanced and utilized to best effect Magsaysay's very real personal qualities. Magsaysay rapidly gained a national reputation as a hands-on defense chief who made surprise inspections of troops in the field and took a personal interest in enforcing discipline and punishing the security forces for casual brutality which had been the norm in central Luzon since the war. Magsaysay was given unprecedented authority by President Quirino to make field promotions and to order courts-martial, and he used both extensively to punish random abuses against the civilian population and to reward combat prowess and aggressiveness.⁶⁰

A starting point to remedy the estrangement of the armed forces from the rural population was an anticorruption campaign within the armed forces, with the appointment of hand-picked army and Constabulary chiefs, and "lots of courts-martial."⁶¹ A 1976 U.S. Army study identifies the assignment of Civil Affairs officers to each battalion as a principal means for the enforcement of the policy.⁶² A widely publicized arrangement by which telegraph offices would transmit complaints to Magsaysay's office for a token fee (equivalent to five cents) was part of the public-relations effort. More important, highly publicized punishments of offending individuals or units was apparently effective in reassuring the civil population that the tenor of government had in fact improved.⁶³ Another innovation stage-managed by the CAO was the promise of land grants to surrendering guerrillas. EDCOR (Economic Development Corps), originally a proposal to provide homesteads for discharged soldiers, developed into a means to undercut Huk demands for land reform.⁶⁴ EDCOR put Army Corps of Engineers crews to work clearing state-owned land, primarily in Mindanao, and a pilot project received its first contingent of homesteaders (in Lanao, Mindanao) in May 1951, including fifty-six ex-Huks ("leavened with . . . retired soldiers or ex-USAFFE guerrillas").⁶⁵ The psy-war return on the EDCOR program was enormous, despite the few Huk beneficiaries: The pilot program was, to all accounts, not the expected penal colony but an opportunity in which the

select group of former guerrillas were indeed given their heart's desire, a family farm. Several were subsequently taken on tours of central Luzon to spread the story of EDCOR's beneficence, and their accounts were amplified by a massive publicity campaign.

After the first project, EDCOR was largely a propaganda exercise— a total of just 246 former Huks benefited from the program.⁶⁶ Bohannon himself suggests that EDCOR was a scam: "As a resettlement program, EDCOR did not accomplish a great deal. I doubt if more than perhaps 300 families of Huks were resettled under that program. But I will guarantee you that at least 3,000 Huks surrendered...."⁶⁷ After EDCOR's launching, moreover, the program changed slightly: Homesteads became a reward to guerrillas not for merely surrendering, but for participating in counterinsurgency operations against their erstwhile comrades, and only a fraction of those would receive land grants. Magsaysay explained that "When they surrender, after we screen them . . . they serve in the army, helping us fight Huks . . . before enjoying any benefits. " At the end of the day, those eligible "draw lots for farms."⁶⁸ When an American journalist suggested Magsaysay's land-grant scheme was soft on the communists— "Then you buy them off?"—his reply was unambiguous: "Oh no. You forget the most important part of the program. We kill Huks. We chase them into the jungle and kill them."⁶⁹

To that end, a widely publicized reward system (along the "wanted dead or alive" line) paid cash for assistance leading to the death or capture of Huk leaders whose photographs and biographies were posted around the country. Bounties were paid to civilians who brought in the bodies of Huks, and posters announced that all Huk "field commanders" were wanted "dead or alive" and had a price on their collective heads.⁷⁰ An article prepared by Bohannon for *Look* magazine (but never published) included photographs of civilians receiving awards for "helping bag" Huk commanders: In one, Magsaysay appears "giving 100,000 pesos in cash (on the table) to the killer of Guillermo Capadocia, Number Two Communist."⁷¹

The psy-war operation also embraced a vast range of the "dirty tricks" with which the CIA was later to be identified. As Bohannon and Filipino officer Napoleon Valeriano observe, "These ranged from 'one-shotters' designed to destroy the credibility of a notorious opponent . . . to sustained operations designed to create distrust or enmity between the Huk and the mass base."⁷² Some later became standards in the repertoire of American counterinsurgency. Bohannon and Valeriano describe many, including the dissemination of cartridges "loaded with dynamite," designed to blow up the weapon and the person holding it when fired. In their 1962 book, the authors argue that these tactics were unacceptable and at no time authorized or approved by the government—but they were, nevertheless, effective. Ten years later, Lansdale described the same tactics without qualification:

I took up the problem [of Huks buying war materials from corrupt soldiers] with the Philippine Army's intelligence and research chiefs.... I asked them if contaminated ammunition could be made and inserted into the stocks being delivered secretly to the Huks. They agreed.... [S]oldiers started reporting they had heard grenades . . . exploding right in the hands of Huk ambushers.... Dirty tricks beget dirty tricks.⁷³

The Magsaysay years also saw a major reorganization of the security establishment and the introduction of aggressive tactics for the more efficient hunting and killing of suspects. Magsaysay's approach to guerrilla war, as described by Lansdale in a 1963 letter, anticipated the U.S. war of attrition in Vietnam:

One of his favorite lectures to the General Staff and to troop units was to ask each of them how many Huks he had killed, pointing out that if each man in the Armed Forces killed only one Huk, the Huks would be wiped out. Later, he applied this same criteria in promotions, asking "How many Huks has he killed?" when given arguments (seniority, schools attended, etc.) for the man's promotion.⁷⁴

The deliberate (and nominally selective) use of terror in psychological operations—what Colonel Lansdale called "tactical psywar"—figured prominently in the 1960s reassessment of Philippine tactics by the U.S. counterinsurgency establishment. A presentation by intelligence officer Major Medardo Justiniano to a seminar on Philippine counterinsurgency held at Fort Bragg in 1961 cited an operation in Luis Taruc's home village, San Luis, as an example of counterterror:

We gathered together the civilians of the region . . . and took them to the bank of the river.... On the other side, 100 to 200 yards away, were my troops in uniform. In the presence of the townspeople these troops. . . began to kill about a dozen "Huk[s]". . . [O]ur troops began to bring out the "Huks" blindfolded . . . and began to bayonet them one by one. While we were killing them some were shouting out the name of the Mayor [and] the names of their principal suppliers. Seeing the Huks killed before their eyes, hearing themselves named . . . these civilians naturally expected to be next on the death lists.⁷⁵

Villagers were subsequently screened, and told, "If you confess, we will not treat you like we have these Huks. " And of course in Justiniano's account, "Almost all these people reported . . . practically one after the other." And the story is rounded out by Justiniano's explanation that the killings never really took place, "It was all a show. We used chicken blood, pig's blood and so on, to make it look real.... But when that pretended atrocity was followed up by psychological operations it really paid off."⁷⁶ Of course, the implied lesson was that real atrocities could be even more effective—at least in the short term.

A number of similar terror operations are described (in similar terms) by Bohannon and Valeriano, including a complete six-page after-action report of a Japanese-style *zona* operation. ⁷⁷ The village of Pulong Plasang, Bulacan, was surrounded by troops, and the inhabitants were concentrated in an

enclosure. A thorough search of the area was conducted in the presence of village elders. Adult villagers were then passed one by one "under the scrutiny of . . . hooded 'Magic Eye' informants" and then taken for interrogation, sometimes accompanied by hooded men. The system is described as virtually 100 percent successful:

With some villagers, it was necessary to resort to a dramatic action to shock them, to convince them that the interrogator would not hesitate to use any methods necessary to extract the truth. Lieutenant Cruz ordered one of his interrogators to resort to a tested ruse to push a particularly stubborn villager to speak frankly. The interrogating Sergeant first arranged for two individuals to be marched off. . . to the interrogation point, the villager heard loud, threatening voices . . . then a few pistol shots, then silence . . . after which he took the villager . . . and marched him off for interrogation. There, the recalcitrant one saw two bodies bloody, covered with banana leaves. What had really happened was that the Sergeant had the preceding individuals, immobilized and silent, liberally drenched with chicken blood. Quietly, the Sergeant explained that he didn't believe in "horsing around" with stubborn civilians.⁷⁸

A similar approach described by Justiniano was the exemplary "use of dead bodies," much as the French displayed the bodies of alleged guerrillas in Algeria. Justiniano explained its purpose as counteracting the Huk hold on "the minds of the masses" "by instilling greater fear of us." On one occasion when "we killed a large number of Huks," "we piled these dead Huks into a truck with the hands and feet dangling outside, a whole truck load of dead bodies, and we drove this truck clear around town, and through the area. "7" A series of photographs submitted by Bohannon to *Look* magazine were identified with such captions as "Government troops pose with dead Huks dumped before them."⁸⁰ In his introductory remarks to a June 1961 Fort Bragg seminar, Lansdale describes his fellow speakers as "fellow gremlins."⁸¹ The role of deception operations and psychological warfare tactics employing terror in the Philippines was a favorite topic of Lansdale's, and the counterinsurgent as prankster, however macabre the joke, was a role he actively promoted. The vigorous claims of success for bizarre psy-war operations in the Philippines today comprise a large part of the opus of lessons learned from the Huk Rebellion.

[A Lansdale discussion of psy-war tactics outlined in a two-volume U.S. Army psy-war manual published in 1976 \(Army Pamphlet 525-71\) focuses on this conflation of terrorism with humor and makes one wonder whether the long-term damage of the terror approach has been seriously considered. The examples given also reflect a deeply condescending assumption of the target populations' simple-mindedness:](#)

[When I introduced the practical-joke aspect of psywar to the Philippine Army, it stimulated some imaginative operations that were remarkably effective.... One psywar operation played upon the popular dread of an *asuang*, or vampire.... When a Huk patrol came along the trail, the ambushers silently snatched the last man of the patrol.... They punctured his neck with two holes, vampire-fashion, held the body up by the heels,](#)

drained it of blood, and put the corpse back on the trail. When the Huks returned to look for the missing man and found their bloodless comrade, every member of the patrol believed that the *asuang* had got him and that one of them would be next.... When daylight came, the whole Huk squadron moved out of the vicinity.⁸²

As far as Colonel Lansdale was concerned, the importance of the story was to provide an example "of tactical psywar in counter-guerrilla actions . . . to indicate that psywar need not consist of putting out leaflets or using amplified sound."⁸³ Bohannon and Valeriano concur on the efficacy of certain terror weapons, and the mutilation of bodies: "Few weapons have quite the same effect on guerrilla morale as a pair of ice picks lashed together, used to puncture a guerrilla jugular, if the guerrilla is left for his companions to pick up. Next in effectiveness is a well- presented bayonet."⁸⁴

Another Lansdale example of tactical psy-war in the Philippines was perhaps even more bizarre than the vampire operation, and was devised to terrify—and to clear the area of—an entire community. As in the previous example, there is no consideration of possible long-term negative repercussions. The operation was also seen as an unqualified success, suggesting a rather unbelievable naivete on the part of either the entire rural population of the Philippines (or Colonel Lansdale himself):

The army unit captured a Huk courier descending from the mountain stronghold to the village. After questioning, the courier, who was a native of the village, woefully confessed his errors in helping the Huks. His testimony was tape-recorded and made to sound as if his voice emanated from a tomb. The courier was killed. His body was left on the Huk-village line of communications. Soldiers in civilian clothes then dropped rumors in the village to the effect that the Huks had killed the courier. The villagers recovered the body and buried the Huk. That night army patrols infiltrated the cemetery and set up audio-equipment which began broadcasting the dead Huk's confession. By dawn, the entire village of terror-stricken peasantry had evacuated! In a few days, the Huks were forced to descend the mountain in search of food. They were quickly captured and/or killed by the army unit.⁸⁵

Psychological operations were paralleled and facilitated by the creation of a range of specialized units for special operations. They included elite units for deep-penetration operations, along lines similar to the British long-range reconnaissance patrols in Malaya, as well as units with an explicit terror role. An elite special patrol force, the Scout-Rangers, carried out long-range patrols with the primary task of spotting the enemy and calling in regular units. A Filipino captain who had served with a U. S. Army Ranger unit in World War II, Rafael "Rocky" Iletto, is credited with the concept of the Scout-Rangers and was their first chief in 1951. The Scout-Rangers operated in one-officer, four-man spotter and hunter-killer units, with one team attached to each Battalion Combat Team. The Scout-Rangers, who received training in jungle warfare, scouting, survival, and other U.S. Army Ranger skills at the United States' Fort McKinley, became the elite force of the military establishment.⁸⁶

Other organizational innovations and tactics centered on measures of deception similar to those employed in the British and French colonial campaigns in Kenya and Indochina. In a variation on the countergangs of the Kenyan insurgency, a pilot countergang was set up in 1948 by the Sixteenth Philippine Constabulary Company, designated "Force X": "The basic idea was to make this specially trained force into a realistic pseudo-Huk unit that could, in enemy guise, infiltrate deep into enemy territory."⁸⁷ The forty-seven initial members of Force X were dressed and equipped like Huks. They were taught in a remote rain forest base to talk and act like Huks by four captured guerrillas who had been "tested, screened, and reindoctrinated to our side and brought to the training base to serve as instructors."⁸⁸ The principal aim was to enable government forces to get close enough to guerrilla forces to eliminate selected targets:

Targets can only be tentatively designated and assigned priorities in advance. Much should depend upon opportunities encountered. The killing of leading enemy personalities may be far more important than the destruction of a certain army unit. An appropriate order of priority might be: (1) killing enemy leaders or outstanding fanatics; (2) destroying enemy elite organizations; and (3) penetrating and destroying especially devoted and/or effective enemy support elements.⁸⁹

The "special" forces integrated into the Philippine counterinsurgency effort included both elite formations within the regular, uniformed branches of the armed services and a broad range of *irregular* forces organized on a paramilitary basis. Some of these could be characterized as "counterguerrillas," irregular forces using ostensibly *guerilla* organization and tactics to combat the Huks—what Bohannon and Valeriano termed "quasi-guerrilla" forces, "members of a regularly established military force or a substantive government, assigned, volunteered, or required by force of circumstances to take up a guerrilla-like role."⁹⁰

These forces included the pseudo-guerrilla unit Force X, although its purpose was more one of deception and deep penetration than tactical counterguerrilla operations, and quasi-guerrilla *auxiliary* forces, which were described by Bohannon as "ranging from wild mountain pygmies, Negritos, to home guard and church congregation units."⁹¹ The "deputizing" of civilian gunmen—and certain religious sects—to go "Huk-hunting," with bounties paid for successful hunters, was a clear antecedent to the "vigilante" organizations of the post-Marcos period. Press reports at the time included photographs of ceremonies in which Magsaysay handed over reward money to "consortiums" of civilian gunmen who had clubbed together to go Huk-hunting.

In an April 1954 paper, Lansdale identified as a key "accomplishment" of his team "teaching and employing paramilitary forces in the tactics of political warfare."⁹² In the draft of his memoirs, Lansdale lauds in particular the

civilian volunteer counter guerrillas, many former USAFFE guerrillas, "who wanted to contribute their spare time from their businesses and professions towards patriotic service. They were brought together, usually in informal meetings in my house."⁹³ One such effort to develop a "grass-roots" *political* organization with paramilitary characteristics, the *Barangay* (neighborhood) movement, progressed gradually during the Magsaysay period but assumed importance as a civilian component of the security system only in the 1970s when it was reinvigorated by the Marcos regime.⁹⁴

An important innovation in the campaign against the Huks was the deployment of hunter-killer counter guerrillas: small, mobile units with seemingly total freedom to respond to guerrilla action with assassination and terror. The "Nenita" unit was the first force that deliberately mimicked what was perceived to be the guerrilla's no-holds-barred approach. An elite force, Nenita was built around a core of four officers and fifty enlisted men, although in action it was sometimes reinforced by two or three companies (each about ninety-eight men) of regular Constabulary.⁹⁵ The commander of the Nenita force was Napoleon Valeriano; its name, according to former colleagues, was that of his girlfriend of the time. Valeriano later described its origin, at the end of 1946, when he "obtained permission to form a hunter-killer team and take it into the field to 'find and finish' the Supreme Commander, Luis Taruc."⁹⁶

Colonel Lansdale described Valeriano's style and some of his men in a journal kept during 1947—notes that contrast rather dramatically from his sanitized writing for the public.

All this killing during a peace is getting rather sickening. Bondoc, the accused mayor . . . was captured by Major Napoleon Valeriano's commando force of Philippine MPs. Valeriano is a friend of mine who heads a special headquarters intelligence team for MPC (PA) [Military Police Command (Philippine Army)]. These Filipinos run around Central Luzon with skull and crossbones flags flying from their jeeps and scout cars.... Cruelty and lust for murder are commonplace. Philippine Army MPs take but few prisoners.

They merely shoot their newly captured Huks, often in the back of the head. It is hard to prove sedition, the true crime, against these folks, so why waste time with legal proceedings. On the other hand, MPs live but a few agonized moments after the Huks capture them. Both MPs and Huks have told me they learned to kill during the Jap occupation.⁹⁷

Another account, by a top army officer, describes the style of the Nenita or "skull squadron" in similar terms: "The special tactic of these squadrons was to cordon off areas; anyone they caught inside the cordon was considered an enemy.... When I was stationed in the Candaba area [in Pampanga], almost daily you could find bodies floating in the river, many of them victims of Valeriano's Nenita Unit."⁹⁸ A senator wrote to the president in 1948 to demand Major Napoleon Valeriano's withdrawal from Pampanga, "for having

committed many atrocities, not only against dissident elements but against law-abiding people."⁹⁹ In their book, Bohannon and Valeriano acknowledge the scattergun approach of Nenita terror tactics, and that the Huks sometimes gained supporters as a consequence. They conclude, however, that on balance the tactics were necessary for the counterinsurgent, even though Nenita's reputation did pose a problem for the government: "It was essential to make the armed forces more effective . . . and this could scarcely be done if techniques of proven utility were summarily abandoned."¹⁰⁰

Major Valeriano, despite (or because of) the reputation attached to his prototype special unit, was promoted to lieutenant colonel and in July 1950 assumed command of an elite army BCT, the Seventh, that would develop a reputation not unlike that of Nenita between 1950 and 1954. Bohannon and Valeriano date the Nenita operation only to the 1946-1949 period, suggesting the units were abandoned in 1950 under a strategy of "changing the attitudes of the soldiers toward the civilians, toward the guerrillas—in fact, toward the war." Attitudes did, in fact, change after Magsaysay assumed the Defense portfolio in September 1950, toward a more comprehensive, more unconventional counterinsurgency strategy and a reduction of random brutality against the civilian population. The terror component of counterinsurgency and the organizational form of the Nenita group remained, but was applied in a more studied manner by the Seventh BCT and other special units after 1950. Nenita, moreover, rather than fading away in disgrace became a model for counterinsurgent organization in the 1960s.

The Magsaysay years saw a modification of the Nenita approach to combine the virtues of the "pseudo-guerrilla" Force X with Nenita's ruthless operations. Valeriano's Seventh BCT recruited the former head of Force X, Captain Marana, as operations chief (G-3), while Nenita's intelligence chief (G-2) Captain Medardo Justiniano assumed the same role in the BCT. The lessons learned from Force X and Nenita were combined in the Seventh BCT's Charlie Company, a unit of some hundred men trained in a secret jungle camp to act and fight "like guerrillas." Unlike Force X, Charlie Company was never used for deep-cover penetration missions; as Bohannon noted, there was no way they could "link up" with Huk units after the Force X experience: the Huks were too wary. "" Charlie Company's true forte, however, was to provide small units of from four to twelve men for long-range reconnaissance in the Sierra Madre Mountains, "in disguise or in uniform," or for covert intelligence operations—including secret arrests—in guerrilla disguise. ¹⁰²

Charlie Company's covert action role with the Seventh BCT was performed in "collaboration with the S-2 [intelligence] Section (all ex-Nenita)" and with Military Intelligence Service " 'A' and 'B' Teams (partly manned by Nenita

men)...."¹⁰³ An operation to break the Huk infrastructure in Pandi, an area targeted as a Huk refuge near Manila was described by Bohannon at a 1961 Fort Bragg seminar:

Because of the temporary suspension of the writ of habeas corpus . . . it was possible for the 7th BCT to detain suspects indefinitely.... [I]t was recommended that several individuals be "snatched" and brought to 7th BCT Headquarters for interrogation.... The teams were able to snatch no less than 70 individuals from different points of the area without being detected by the inhabitants.¹⁰⁴

The outcome of the operation was described as "the liquidation of the Pandi sanctuary."¹⁰⁵ It is, of course, impossible at this distance to determine the fate of all those "snatched"; in the best of worlds they would have been released unharmed, or brought before the courts. But the very nature of "disappearance" as a tactic removes from its executors the constraints of accountability: The death of a prisoner whom no one knows has been detained is a nonevent.

Charlie Company also provided highly trained personnel to serve as a link with the civilian irregulars brought into the counterinsurgency effort. In the 1960s, Bohannon described the training for this task as resembling "that given present-day Special Forces units," and indeed the tasks they performed are virtually indistinguishable from those of the latter-day Special Forces in Vietnam and beyond."¹⁰⁶ Twenty-four-man teams were detailed to stiffen civilian irregulars, and to carry out advisory, instruction, and operations command functions. Although some work was done with other paramilitary forces, members of the Negrito minority, and religious sects the principal irregular force at hand was the civilian guards based throughout the rural areas, a heritage of the Japanese occupation. Charlie Company and other special units worked closely in the adaptation of the civilian guard system as a part of the new, aggressive counterinsurgency system.¹⁰⁷

In central Luzon, the part-time "civilian guards" assumed major importance in the counterinsurgency campaign. They included former USAFFE guerrillas — who had long feuded with the Huks— as well as the "private armies" of landowners and political chieftains (which are still a part of the Philippines scene). The private armies then, as now, had formal police powers, were subject to government control through the uniformed security services, and were funded in part from the public purse, in part by private employers. As such, they were inextricably bound to elite patrons and exercised on their behalf enormous, and often extralegal, discretionary powers of repression.¹⁰⁸

Although little has been published by official sources on the institution of the civilian guards and its role in the counterinsurgency, there is evidence that it was considerable. In Nueva Ecija province alone in central Luzon, civilian guards in 1949 numbered some 2,000 armed men. ¹⁰⁹ In contrast,

Constabulary force levels in the provinces of central Luzon at the time could range down to as few as 100.¹¹⁰ Civilian guards, as a locally based, paramilitary resource tied directly to local elites, provided a major manpower tool for both short-term counterinsurgency sweeps and special operations, and they comprised the majority of armed security personnel permanently based in the rural areas.

A model of paramilitary integration with conventional forces was developed by the Seventh BCT in Bulacan—after Colonel Valeriano took command in July 1950. Valeriano and Bohannon maintain that, at the time, civilian guards and municipal police—another manpower tool—were "under virtually no supervision by the Armed Forces."¹¹¹ The plan augmented the about 950 men of the BCT by training, equipping, and directing civilian guard irregulars, and bringing them into the military command structure, with "capable soldiers" assigned as "liaison (actually as instructors and commanders) for major civil-guard units." Guards were provided with radios, and when units became capable of putting up substantial resistance to guerrilla attacks, "troops were withdrawn from the area."¹¹²

The objective was to free combat troops from static duties so that they could seek out and destroy the adversary, and secondarily, to bring people from the trouble areas into open collaboration with authorities ("people who might otherwise be at best apathetic; at worst hostile to it").¹¹³ But the Philippine formula did not or could not overcome the basic political contradiction on which the civilian guard system was built: Although the guards took orders from military authorities, they were the employees of local elites, and the natural enemies not only of the guerrillas but of the bulk of the population. As such, they could hardly be seen as representative of "the people," and served primarily as enforcers. One officer later described the men in the guards as "local gangsters, goons, people of bad reputations out to make good with the law avoid punishment, and make a living besides."¹¹⁴ Luis Taruc described them as "men easily bought by a few pesos and a promise of loot, criminals and thugs...."¹¹⁵ Bohannon and Valeriano acknowledge some "disadvantages" to the system, but insisted they could be overcome "by careful selection of personnel and adequate supervision."¹¹⁶

Although the Philippines paramilitary system was rehabilitated in the 1960s as a model, criticism in the 1950s was harsh enough to bring serious calls for disbanding the civilian guards. The response to the charges was twofold. On the one hand, measures were introduced in and after 1950 to bring the irregulars under tight military control, leavening their forces with regular cadre (the pattern prescribed by doctrine since the 1960s). On the other (and at the same time), publicity campaigns were undertaken by then-Defense Secretary Magsaysay announcing that the civilian guards would in fact be disbanded. As late as January 1954, authorities continued to pledge a clean-

up of the civilian guards (including those considered Temporary Police [TP]) and to publicize the disbanding of particularly atrocious forces. A Malacañang press release of 10 January 1954 is a model of counterinsurgent public relations:

The President [Magsaysay] expressed the opinion that civilian guards "are not conducive to the development of a healthy democracy in this country" and cited many abuses they had committed against tenants and the poor that were denounced to him while he was secretary of defense.

He pointed out that many civilian guards accepted ridiculously low salaries of P150 yearly because they supplemented this by much more through royalties from landlords and abusive impositions on tenants.

He said civilian guards, taking orders from landlords, dictated the distribution of crops "through guns" and not according to the crop sharing law.¹¹⁷

The Magsaysay critique of the civilian guards, without effective accompanying action to disband them, served to distance central authority from accountability for the abuses of these forces, while retaining an armed force at the local level that could get on with the dirty work of counterinsurgency. The Magsaysay pledge, that the system would be abolished *when* the army could keep peace alone, fell back on the argument of *necessity*: " 'The civilian guards claim that they are needed to maintain peace,' he said. 'Keeping the peace is the army's business, not theirs. As soon as we are sure that the army has the necessary men and materials to handle the job, we are going to break them up.' "¹¹⁸

The brutality and injustice of the Philippine paramilitary system may be common to any system in which armed irregulars are dependent on, or responsive to, special interests. Although, in central Luzon, civilian guards responded to the incentives of economic advantage and petty authority, irregulars attached to elites elsewhere in the Philippines may have been further motivated by religious or cultural ties to their paymasters to form part of "private" armies with public powers. The introduction of ideology as a motive for counterinsurgent organization, notably the negative ideology of anticommunism, would become a very real factor in the paramilitary structures of the Philippines in the 1970s, eventually to dominate the scene even in the 1990s.

The Philippine paramilitary option, then a seemingly effective deployment of civilian irregular forces, left a clear mark on subsequent American doctrine and provided prototypes for U.S.- sponsored counterinsurgency programs around the world in the 1960s. Counterinsurgency studies stressed that paramilitary organization could significantly increase the manpower available where regular forces were few in number, that the systems were cost-effective; that they released regular forces for aggressive patrolling by

undertaking static defense duties; and that they had enormous political potential, taking counterinsurgency to the grass roots and making the population part of the defense effort. The intermeshing of regular and irregular forces, a hallmark of such systems, was of particular relevance to today's constellation of paramilitary forces (not least in the Philippines) and their role in government counterinsurgency strategies.

The general adaptation of World War II psy-war techniques for home consumption, the legitimation of "dirty tricks" and terror tactics in counterinsurgency, and above all the premise that insurgency justified and required the unrestricted tactics of unconventional warfare were further principal lessons of the Philippines experience. The Philippine experience, indeed, returns at every juncture to a lesson that guerrillas are best fought by guerrillas, or, more appropriately, by the government forces using irregular tactics that Bohannon and Valeriano dubbed "quasi-guerrillas." This and most of the Philippine approach to counterinsurgency would be duly absorbed, first in the U.S. Army's Special Forces training and doctrine, to appear in 1961 in the army's mainstream doctrine of counterinsurgency. Most of its precepts remain intact in American counterinsurgency doctrine today.

Special Warfare Comes to Vietnam and Laos

The deadly application of conventional military technology and firepower in Vietnam far outweighed the counterinsurgency dimension of the war. The counterinsurgency dimension, too, was skewed toward lethal force, particularly through the medium of unconventional warfare. The emphasis on OTI training and operations in the tactics of unconventional warfare, as if Vietnam were an occupied country—occupied, that is, by undesirable Vietnamese—was one aspect of the approach that colored the larger counterinsurgency program. American forces were already experimenting in unconventional warfare in Vietnam as the French prepared their withdrawal and as American unconventional warfare doctrine was just beginning to gel.

The covert dimension of American involvement in Indochina began even before the beginning of aid to the beleaguered French in the north and grew with the increasing commitment of American support to Ngo Dinh Diem. American unconventional warfare activities in Indochina during the world war had for a time thrown OSS officers together with Ho Chi Minh's underground Viet Minh in partnership against the Japanese. Almost a decade later, as the French forces faced destruction at Dien Bien Phu, a renewal of unconventional warfare began against a Viet Minh on the brink of triumph. The object was to sour the achievement of a communist-led liberation movement and to contain that movement to the northern half of Vietnam.

The American policy shift in May 1945, "hereafter the French were no longer to be kept out of Allied operations in Indochina, resulted in OSS training and assistance for a force of French-Vietnamese "commandos" for raids on Japanese forces. Although the end of the war rapidly overtook OSS plans, joint OSS-French operations were precedents for American unconventional operations against the independent north. The most successful of the OSS-French raids hit Japanese installations at Lang Son in northeastern Vietnam in July 1945, led by OSS Lieutenant Lucien Conein, a former French national and Foreign Legionnaire who had joined the U.S. Army in 1940.¹¹⁹ After the fall of Japan, Indochina was left largely in the hands of the French—and the Viet Minh. American unconventional warfare activities there were renewed on a large scale in 1954.

In January 1954, the view in Washington was that, although little prospect of victory could be discerned, the French could continue to stave off defeat in Indochina. That month a presidential Special Committee on Indochina was established to consider options for aiding the French while still adhering to the policy of avoiding American involvement on the ground.

Recommendations included the provision of American air power (through a "voluntary" air group), an increase of the CIA presence, and a program to assist anticommunist Vietnamese to develop "an unconventional warfare capability."¹²⁰ Air power was provided through the CIA's secret air force in a futile effort to resupply the besieged garrison at Dien Bien Phu, and the CIA moved into action on the ground as well in the aftermath of the French defeat.

The American unconventional warfare mission was carried out by the CIA in the guise of the "Saigon Military Mission" (SMM), commanded by then-Colonel Edward G. Lansdale. The genesis of the SMM is pinpointed by Lansdale himself to "a Washington policy meeting early in 1954, when Dien Bien Phu was still holding out...." Its objective, even then, "was to assist the Vietnamese, rather than the French, in unconventional warfare . . . [and] to undertake paramilitary operations against the enemy, and to wage political-psychological warfare." Psychological warfare initiatives outlined in the same report included the development of a course in "combat psywar" for the Vietnamese Army and the Ministry of Information, and a number of psy-war gambits to stir up the population in Tonkin in the months before the French evacuation. These operations, in which Lansdale took much pride (and which would subsequently be cited in psy-war texts as models), included such "tricks" as spreading rumors that Chinese divisions had moved into the country in a rampage of rape and destruction (a campaign deemed successful). More significant was the SMM's "black" circulation of bogus leaflets "signed by the Vietminh" warning of a draconian new social order, which were designed to generate a massive refugee flow to the south. Lansdale considered these a major coup: "The day following the distribution

of these leaflets, refugee registration tripled. Two days later Vietminh currency was worth half the value prior to the leaflets."¹²¹

In a 1960 lecture at a service school, Lansdale explained the rationale for psychological operations to encourage flight to what was now the South (and discourage, through another scheme, a refugee flow to what was now the North). The armistice, explained Lansdale, split Vietnam at the 17th parallel and declared that in June 1956, the Vietnamese

would hold a plebiscite to vote on the future of their country.... There had to be an upset of Communist calculations at Geneva on how many people they would have under their control for the planned 1956 Plebiscite.... [I]t was imperative to shift the majority vote from the Communist controls in the North to the Free South.

To this end, "many psychological operations were carried out, to give these people who desired freedom, but who loved their native soil, a last push to leave it before the Communists . . . took over."¹²²

There was, of course, no plebiscite in 1956. The United States would later base both its own defense of the Diem regime in the South and the regime's refusal to take part in July 1956 nationwide elections on the United States' not having signed the respective corollary to the Geneva Agreements.¹²³

Colonel Lansdale's schemes in the South were slightly less ambitious, and included hiring astrologers to produce an almanac foretelling disaster for "certain Vietminh leaders and undertakings," and producing what he called "a Thomas Paine type series of essays on Vietnamese patriotism against the Communist Vietminh" (under the direction, respectively, of ersatz patriots, Americans Lieutenant Phillips and Captain Arundel). The essays were disseminated, through discreet inducements, to the Saigon media: "The publisher . . . is a fine Vietnamese girl who has been the mistress of an anti-American French civilian. Despite anti-American remarks by her boy friend, we had helped her keep her paper from being closed by the government . . . and she found it profitable to heed our advice on the editorial content of her paper."¹²⁴

The special team's primary mission, after the 21 July 1954 Geneva Agreements, was defined as preparing for future "paramilitary operations in Communist areas" after the agreed withdrawal from the North.¹²⁵ In this context, Lansdale's team would work to prepare a clandestine stay-behind infrastructure in the North and attempt to carry out a covert "scorched earth" campaign to destroy as much of Hanoi's urban infrastructure as possible before the handover. Although neither effort was particularly successful, they would provide further luster to Lansdale's legend as a genius of covert action.

The stay-behind, paramilitary aspect of the SMM was largely delegated to Major Lucien Conein (according to Lansdale, "a paramilitary specialist, well-known to the French for his help with French-operated Maquis in Tonkin . . .").¹²⁶ Conein's people were based in Hanoi, and as part of the "cover" for their action—which violated the Geneva Agreements—"supervised the refugee flow for the Hanoi airlift organized by the French."¹²⁷ Conein's force, like French irregular forces, was based on a preexistent group, the Dai Viets, a nationalist secret society. Identified with the pseudonym "Binh" in *The Pentagon Papers*, it was meant to serve initially on a mercenary basis under U.S. control, "to come eventually under government control when the government was ready for such activities."¹²⁸

In the South, the "Hag" group, or paramilitary cadre for deployment in Tonkin, was organized through the Vietnamese Colonel Nguyen Van Vy, a veteran of Conein's 1945 commando operation (Lansdale arranged for him to be promoted to "general"). Conein, later a lieutenant colonel, would subsequently play a key role in American unconventional warfare operations in North Vietnam after the collapse of the French in 1954, and in 1963 would serve as the CIA intermediary with Vietnamese generals plotting the overthrow (and assassination) of President Ngo Dinh Diem. He reappeared in 1974 as head of the "Special Operations and Field Support Group" of the Drug Enforcement Administration—ostensibly a covert antinarcotics strike force but suspected of being a cover for Cold War covert action.¹²⁹

The navy's top-secret "Task Force 98" provided clandestine transportation for trainees to a "secret training site," probably at Okinawa.¹³⁰ "Okinawa Station" at the army's Camp Chinen was "a paramilitary support asset," which in a crisis "could be devoted in its entirety to this mission"; "as a self-contained base under Army cover," it provided the kind of security necessary for the training of clandestine paramilitary forces.¹³¹ The contribution of the United States' "Binh" and "Hag" paramilitary teams was largely limited to petty sabotage and propaganda action in the North *before* the evacuation of Hanoi in October 1954. (Although stay-behind forces were in place in 1955, their subsequent efforts at covert action were apparently short-lived.) By September 1954, covert teams were already busily engaged in "spoiling" operations intended to destroy facilities that would be useful to the incoming government SMM agents were sent in to attempt "to destroy the modern presses" of the North's largest printer. The Viet Minh, however, had moved agents into the plant to foil the attempts.¹³² The SMM's successes were little more than costly terrorist pranks of little military significance: for example, contaminating the oil supply of the city buses, and the "delayed sabotage of the railroad (which required teamwork with a CIA special technical team in Japan who performed their part brilliantly)."¹³³

As the Saigon Military Mission was wreaking minor havoc in the North and orchestrating psychological operations in both North and South, Colonel Lansdale was also playing power broker in Saigon, cultivating a rapidly developed friendship with President Diem into what he presumably believed would be a successful partnership along the lines of his work with Magsaysay in the Philippines.

Colonel Lansdale became familiar with Vietnam's sectarian militias and private armies in the summer of 1953, while "surveying maquis, guerrilla bands, and similar units" during General John W. O'Daniel's mission to Indochina. '34 In the North, Lansdale had met Catholic bishops and militia leaders, as well as leaders of the Vietnamese Kuomintang Party VNQDD with the help of French officers.¹³⁵ The French influenced the development first of the United States' unconventional Special Forces programs in Vietnam, and thereby the counterinsurgency programs and doctrines that followed.

One of the most colorful of the French officers who befriended Ed Lansdale, Colonel Jean Leroy, had himself become the virtual warlord of the partly Catholic Ben Tre Province. Colonel Leroy introduced Lansdale to the leaders of the sects and assorted private armies in the South.¹³⁶ As Lansdale later recalled, he saw in these volatile groups future leaders of a free Vietnam:

In those early days in Vietnam I was searching, of course, for those Vietnamese who were demonstrably able to inspire and lead their fellow Vietnamese.... If the Vietnamese nationalists ever were to have a viable society of their own, they would need some remarkable leaders.... In effect, the Hoa Hao leaders were warlords, each with his own fiefdom just as were some of the Cao Dai, Binh Xuyen, and Catholic leaders. It was a strange, feudal milieu for an American believer in the precepts of Jefferson.... Somchow, all of the nationalist forces had to be brought together as a team, if the Vietnamese were ever to have a free society of their own.¹³⁷

Lansdale's plans for the warlords reflected his peculiarly simplistic vision of nation-building. Nationalism, once determined to be correct and useful in the new American sphere, was seen to require careful cultivation and occasional ruthless pruning by a sponsoring power. A colonial or imperial power, in this analysis, could readily harness the potential for nationalism to its own purpose, as had the Japanese in some of their occupied territories. In Vietnam, writes Colonel Lansdale, the Japanese intelligence force Kempeitai's use of 3,000 Cao Dai as paramilitary and guerrilla forces offered "an interesting lesson" in nationalism.¹³⁸ The Cao Dai were, however, nationalists considerably before the Japanese occupation, and their party militia predated the Kempeitai initiative. The lesson in the matter was to reinforce a conviction that an ostensibly nationalist group could be "brought into being" by a sponsor and induced to serve new masters, whether French, Japanese, American—or South Vietnamese.

The CIA's close involvement in the affairs of Indochina had persisted throughout the 1950s and placed the agency in a strong position to influence subsequent counterinsurgency programs. In 1970, Roswell Gilpatric, President Kennedy's Undersecretary of Defense, described the CIA's influence in an oral history interview: As Indochina became the principal Cold War arena after 1960, the CIA was first off the mark to respond to the call for action and innovation, and Vietnam became "a sort of proving ground for both [*sic*] ideas, tactics, and equipment" of counterinsurgency.¹³⁹

There was initially little conflict between the agency and the military simply because there was initially little conflict between the agency and the military simply because there was no prospect of the military undertaking the vast tasks shouldered by the CIA. As a consequence, the CIA molded the approach to, for example, paramilitary organization, in a manner that would have taken some undoing even had the military the will to do so. Gilpatric notes:

[T]here was a developing issue between the agency and the army over who should be training the Montagnards and the Home Guard and other military and paramilitary groups in Vietnam. But that came only after the army had sufficient people out there to take it on. Initially, the agency, I guess, had the largest staff of any of the U.S. element. I've never seen the exact figures, but they carried more clout than anybody else did certainly through the end of '61.¹⁴⁰

The CIA's "clout" ran to more than simple bureaucratic strength in Indochina. By process of elimination, the cadre for the training and leadership of the military's own counterinsurgents were often themselves veterans of covert service with the CIA. The military's specialist counterinsurgents after 1960 would be made in the CIA's own paramilitary image. As the military rapidly moved to comply with Kennedy's demand for a military capability to do the things previously left to the CIA, it naturally turned to its own unconventional warfare specialists, the Special Forces. In the first months of 1961, Kennedy's new team found that the principal innovations in the field of unconventional warfare were being pursued in Laos, not Vietnam.¹⁴¹

Because the Geneva Agreements had prohibited a U. S. military presence in newly independent Laos, a military assistance program, a "Programs Evaluation Office" (PEO), was set up in December 1955 and staffed by nominal civilians: military personnel who had "retired" or were put on reserve status for the duration of their stint.¹⁴² Over the next four years Laos—not Vietnam—was the principal theater of American covert action in Indochina, as the U.S. government secretly backed a succession of rightist princes and generals, brought about the ouster of pluralist, neutralist leaders and the dissolution of a troublesome National Assembly, and began the organization of Laotian Meo tribesmen as the nucleus of a secret army.¹⁴³

The level of American training for the Laotian army was stepped up in July 1959, when thirteen Special Forces teams arrived "disguised as contracted civilian specialists."¹⁴⁴ Other covert training programs of Laotians, under CIA or army auspices, took place in Thailand and in training sites in the Philippines.¹⁴⁵ Laos was apparently the first theater of operations in which Special Forces worked with both conventional troops and unconventional commando-style forces.¹⁴⁶

In 1960, the Special Forces role changed from trainer to combat adviser, from military mission to participant in offensive, unconventional warfare. On 9 August, the government that had secretly agreed to the U.S. mission was overthrown in a coup that restored former Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma to power (the prince had been ousted, for his neutralist policies, at U.S. instance in mid- 1958). The coup leader, paratroop commander Captain Kong Le, was a graduate of "CIA-sponsored Philippine scout and ranger school."¹⁴⁷ (Special Forces and Ranger trained officers also surprised their patrons elsewhere in 1960, as Guatemalan officers Luis Turcios Lima and Marco Antonio Yon Sosa led an officers' revolt on 13 November; the conspirators would provide the nucleus of Guatemala's later guerrilla movement.)

Kong Le's first step was to invite Prince Souvanna Phouma to establish a pluralist government dedicated to strict neutrality. The French responded with support for the new government, and the withdrawal of military support to rival forces. The American response was twofold and two-faced. The military mission (PEO) remained in contact with the new government, while a second military group set up in the south organized a counterrevolt. Special Forces' trainers turned combat advisers and led countercoup forces that recaptured Vientiane on 17 December.¹⁴⁸ The retreating neutralist forces, however, remained in control of much of the north and east of the country, and they coalesced with the nationalist—and reputedly communist—guerrilla forces of the Pathet Lao.

After December 1960, the American presence in Laos grew rapidly, **with** Special Forces continuing their principal training and advisory role. They were organized in twelve-man WHITE STAR Mobile Training Teams (the ordinary size of their "A" Detachment). Their full force of 154 men was in the country by the spring of 1961. The force rose to 300 by October that year, and reached its peak level of 433 Special Forces personnel in July 1962.¹⁴⁹ At that time, Special Forces were assigned to most units of the *Forces Armées de Laos* and, along with Thai mercenaries under CIA direction, led paramilitary irregulars among the Kha and Meo tribesmen of the Laotian highlands.¹⁵⁰ Other unconventional warfare units deployed included "a special battalion of Chinese mercenaries under 'General Lu.'"¹⁵⁰ A further Laotian unit, identified in *The Pentagon Papers* as an American

unconventional warfare resource, was the National Directorate of Coordination, two battalions devoted to "intelligence operations," with "a capability for sabotage, kidnapping, commando-type raids, etc." — more or less the full range of unconventional warfare tactics then established in Special Forces doctrine.

The organization of tribal peoples in Laos for "guerrilla" warfare against the Pathet Lao and neutralist forces drew directly upon the French experience during the First Indochina War. Meo and Kha forces were organized in hundred-man "Auto-Defense *de Choc*" companies similar to the French GCMA model. The forces of the main Meo leader, yang Pao, had been part of the rear-guard action in 1954 as French forces had withdrawn from the hinterlands of Tonkin and in efforts to relieve the besieged garrison at Dien Bien Phu. By the end of 1961, Colonel (later General) yang Pao placed 8,000 Meo tribesmen at the disposal of the CIA/Special Forces, after having been attracted by a mixture of blandishment and coercion, including a provision of funds and commodities through the CIA, and the guarantee of Meo control of the region's lucrative opium crop (with CIA assistance in transport and market in").¹⁵² Meo officers loyal to Vang Pao visited remote villagers "offering money and arms if [they] joined with yang Pao and threatening reprisals if [they] remained neutral."¹⁵³

By early 1961, the Meo communities recruited for the American plan were placed in an untenable situation: Cut off from their traditional lands and livelihood, they had to fight or perish. Although nominally a "self-defense" scheme, the Meos were to serve as cannon fodder outside their local areas. The American plan forced the evacuation of the 200 or so Meo villages involved, and the relocation of 70,000 residents "to extricate the entire population base from the enemy's reach."¹⁵⁴ The relocation was initially described as a short-term measure: On completion of the expected rapid defeat of the Pathet Lao, the Meo were supposed to return to their home areas. This was not to be, though, and the failure to provide for the population in their new locale made them entirely dependent on CIA air drops of rice and commodities.

After the Meo relocation the terms of the original CIA/Meo arrangement altered: The Meo could no longer afford to cut their ties without facing starvation. As Douglas Blaufarb, an admirer of the Meo and apologist of the *Armée Clandestine* program that would destroy them conceded: "[T]he striking fact is that an estimated 70,000 men, women and children were launched into the mountains to find within months that they were face to face with starvation."¹⁵⁵ That the Meo's predicament was not unforeseen by their patrons is suggested in the November 1961 report to the president on the visit to Vietnam by General Maxwell Taylor and Walt W. Rostow. The Meo, described as "effective guerrilla fighters," were seen to be in an

untenable situation in Laos but still useful as assets within a Vietnam scenario:

[I]t is probable that considerable effort will be made to destroy the guerrilla potential of the Meo. As an alternative to their annihilation, the Meo might be persuaded to migrate in significant numbers to Laos-Vietnam border where there are sparsely settled highlands.... Once in the border area the Meo could be rearmed and there significantly deter Viet Cong violations of the border.

As the Kennedy administration took control over U.S. Army operations in Indochina, it rapidly learned that the principal role there had fallen to the CIA —and army Special Forces—rather than to the conventional armed forces. Roswell Gilpatric later observed that only after his appointment to head the first Vietnam Task Force did he become aware

of how far the CIA was really operating as a quasimilitary organization.... That's the first time I knew they were running Meos in Laos and Montagnards in South Vietnam. And as I got further into it, I found that we were not being told anywhere in the Defense Department very much about what was happening.¹⁵⁶

The importance of the CIA/Special Forces experience in Laos later became apparent in reports on crash training in guerrilla/counterguerrilla operations in the first eighteen months of the Kennedy administration.

A 30 January 1962 Joint Chiefs of Staff memorandum, with a section on "Southeast Asia as a Training Laboratory," provides comparative figures for Special Forces levels in Vietnam and Laos, and outlines their use as training cadre.¹⁵⁷ The paper, intended to show that the military enthusiastically accepted its new brief in the special warfare sphere, stressed that since 1959 the armed forces had trained indigenous military personnel, and "actually participated in operations.... This participation has provided an opportunity to learn more about this type of warfare, to test tactics and doctrine, to refine US techniques and to develop a backlog [*sic*] of personnel with recent experience in this area of the world."

Separate statistics were provided for the military groups (Military Assistance Advisory Groups, MAAG) and the Special Forces personnel assigned to Laos and Vietnam. While the military group in Laos had increased to 253 men in 1962, the group in Vietnam had reached a total strength of 1,137.¹⁵⁸ The emphasis, however, was on those forces with special warfare experience. In Vietnam, "in addition to the MAAG personnel, 100 Army Special Forces team members served for periods of three to six months." And in Laos "an estimated 350 officers and 1,000 soldiers of the Army Special Forces served as Military training teams on six months tours...." The Indochina "laboratory" provided a training cadre of approximately 3,500 officers and enlisted men for the new special warfare requirements.¹⁵⁹

A progress report on military training relating to counterinsurgency was provided to Kennedy's advisers by Chief of Staff Chairman General L. L. Lemnitzer on 30 January 1962, explaining the deep involvement of the U.S. military departments in many aspects of the "struggles" in Laos and Vietnam since 1959, "which have thus served as an excellent training laboratory."¹⁶⁰

The Laotian operation also gave Special Forces direct experience in running a mercenary army in unconventional warfare: WHITE STAR was a campaign of offensive *guerilla* warfare, a campaign to disrupt order, and so was rather different in conception from the organization of a program to restore order, to *counter* insurgency in Vietnam. The contradiction went unnoticed. The high command and the administration made no distinction and lumped counterinsurgency with other specialties in the field of unconventional warfare. Experience in running Meo mercenaries in Laos and peacekeeping in Vietnam were both, in the military mind, experience in "this type of warfare.'

1. Benedict J. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines* (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day Publishers, 1979), pp. 194-95; Luis Taruc, *He Who Rides the Tiger* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1967), pp. 38-39. In Taruc's 1953 book, *Bon, of the People* (Bombay: People's Publishing House), pp. 216-23 he lists villages burned or partially destroyed, incidents of mass killings, rape, and looting in a litany of destruction.
2. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion*, pp. 194-98; Charles Bohannon and Napolcon Valeriano, *Counterguerilla Operations* (New York: Praeger, 1962), pp. 96-99. Although the two sources are based on quite different perspectives—one on the testimony of central Luzon peasants and former Huks, the other on the counterinsurgent experience—the picture of repression in the 1946-1950 period differs only in the latter's claims that the tactics were effective.
3. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion*, p. 189.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 200.
5. Official government barrio councils and even the local Parent Teacher Associations served as covers for the Huks. Kerkvliet, *ibid.*, p. 175.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 210-13.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 244. Citing statistics provided to him in June 1974 by the Agency for International Development (AID) Kerkvliet gives U.S. assistance for fiscal years 1951 through 1956 at \$380 million in economic aid, and \$116 million in military assistance.
8. Memo for the Record, Subject: Soldier Demonstrations in Manila, 16 January 1946. P&O 370.1 (Section 1) (Cases 1- 20), National Archive RG 319 (declassified 10 August 1987).

9. *Ibid.*
10. Central Intelligence Agency, "The Current Situation in the Philippines, " 30 March 1949, p. 3. P&O 350.05 (30 March 1949), National Archive RG 319 (declassified 10 August 1987).
11. *Ibid.*, pp 3-4.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 147, citing Major Edward G. Lansdale, Chief, intelligence Branch, Head quarters, AFWESPAC, "The Philippine Presidential Campaign, 11," 14 March 1946, p. 10. At that time Lansdale was also deputy G-2 officer at the Headquarters of the Philippines-Ryukyus Command (PHILRYCOM).
13. *Ibid.*
14. Edward Lansdale, Journal No. 17, 24 August 1947, Manila. Lansdale Papers, Hoover Institution Archives.
15. *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy* 4, 1950-52, p. 4331, citing Memo, JCS to Sec. Def, "Internal Security Situation in the Philippines," 23 May 1950. The JCS official history observes in retrospect that "quite possibly, this estimate was exaggerated. "
16. *Ibid.*, p. 431, Intelligence Memo No. 296, "Current Situation in the Philippines," 6 June 1950.
17. Col. J. R. Crume, Jr., Chief, Operational Logistics Section, Logistics Group, OPI), memo for the Record, Philippine Army, 12 March 1946. P&O 091.711 P.I. (Section 1) (Cases 1-7), National Archives RG 319. A Philippine Constabulary chronology is included in "AFP-OC Fusion Questionnaire," *Philippine Armed Forces Journal* (February 1949), pp. 36-39. Although the first Military Police (MP) companies were created on 15 November 1944 under USAFFE direction with "the mission of civil law enforcement and cooperation with civil authorities," the Military Police Command (Philippine Army [PA]) was formally constituted by Executive Order on 21 June 1945, incorporating all Military Police units. Although formally part of the army after independence, an Executive Order of 14 October 1947 shifted control of the MPC from the Department of Defense to the Department of the Interior. The Secretary of the Interior retained control after the MPC became the Philippine Constabulary by an order of 7 January 1948. The "fusion" of the army and Constabulary in 1949 restored control over both elements of the security system to the Secretary of Defense.
18. Joint Military Advisory Group Command (JMAGC), Weekly Summary of Activities, 24 December 1947; 13 March 1948, P&O 091.711 PI (Section V-A), Box 109, National Archives RG 319.
19. JMAGC, Weekly Summary of Activities, 13 January 1948, P&O 091.711 PI (Section V-A), Box 109, National Archives RG 319.
20. *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy* 4, p. 431.
21. Bohannon and Valeriano, *Counter guerrilla Operations*, pp. 122-25; and Stephen R. Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency in the Philippines," *Journal of Contemporary Asia*,

- vol. 2, 1977, in Daniel Schirmer and Stephen Shalom, eds., *The Philippines Reader* (Boston: South End Press, 1987), pp. 112-13, on the role of the U.S. Military Advisory Group in the military reorganization. Battalion Combat Teams normally incorporated three rifle companies of 110 men, a weapons company equipped with mortars and heavy machine guns, a field artillery battery, and reconnaissance and headquarters companies. Although maximum force levels could reach 1,100, actual strength was generally considerably less, and the forces of each BCT were often deployed over a large area *in* small units.
22. Edward Geary Lansdale, draft manuscript for *In the Midst of Wars*, p. 37, in Lansdale Papers, Box 9. Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University. 23 *The Joint Chief of Staff and National Policy*, p. 434; these figures are for Military Assistance Program (MAP) expenditures; in addition \$2.5 million worth of surplus stocks were delivered in FY 1950, \$1 million in 1951 and \$1 million in 1952. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion*, p. 244, appears to have the most up-to-date reckoning, citing 1974 Agency for International Development figures giving the military assistance *appropriations between* 1951 and 1954, the key period, at \$67 million— a figure that doesn't include the costing of surplus stocks handed over. Frederica A Bunge, *The Philippines: A Country Study* (Washington, D.C.: Secretary of the Army/GPO, 1984), p. 42, puts at \$169 million the total worth of aid and equipment provided between March 1947 and 1957.
 23. "You Don't Kill Communism with Guns Alone (1953 interview with Ramón Magsaysay), from *US News and World Report*, in *The Dirty Wars: Guerrilla Actions and Other Forms of Unconventional Warfare* (New York: Delacorte, 1968), p. 187. 25 Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency in the Philippines," p. 117.
 24. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
 25. *Ibid.* Shalom adds that after requests for American napalm were turned down, it was manufactured locally with JUSMAG advice, but was considered to have "interior burning qualities." Bohannon and Valeriano, *Counterinsurrection Operations*, p. 83, give a partial recipe for the homemade napalm predating American shipments, described as "a very effective substitute" incorporating old tires, coconut husks, and, of course, gasoline.
 26. *Ibid.*, p. 117.
 27. "Telegram from the Charge in the Philippines to the Secretary of State," 7 April 1950, cited in Larry Cable, *Conflict of Myths: The Development of American — and the Vietnam War* (New York: New York University Press, 1986), p. 53. The report agreed with an earlier CIA report, attributing the main drive behind the Huk movement to "the serious agrarian reform problem of the Central Luzon Plain." It also criticized the Constabulary's failure to seek out and destroy Huk units ("they are not vigorous in pursuit") and condemned the Constabulary's corruption and brutality ("instead of winning popular support . . . it has alienated the rural population").
 28. *Ibid.*
 29. "Memorandum by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense," 6 September 1950, in *ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

30. Graham Greene, *The Quiet American* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969 [1955]), p. 61. In Greene's dedication to Vietnamese friends, he states that he has borrowed little in the way of characters from his five years as a journalist in Saigon ("Pyle. . . Fowler. . . these have had no originals in the life of Saigon or Hanoi") .
31. Biographical data is drawn from introductory notes to finding aids for the Lansdale Paper at the Hoover Institution archive at Stanford University, and from the *Philippines Armed Forces Journal (January 1948)*, p. 29. The year-by-year biographical note with his private papers at Hoover does not explain the apparent overlap of OSS and military intelligence service:
 - World War 11 Served with the O.S.S.
 - 1943 Promoted to Lieutenant, U.S. Army. Served in military intelligence for duration of war.
 - 1945 Promoted to Major. Transterred to Philippines, AFWESPAC. Appointed Chief of Intelligence Division . . . helped Philippine Army rebuild its Intelligence Services.
32. In his memoirs, *In the Midst of Wars: An American's Mission to Southeast Asia* (New York: Harper and Row. 1972), Lansdale makes much of the affection in which the Filipinos held him, to the extent of a footnote (p. 125) giving the nicknames given to him: "Brod," from his pronunciation of "brodder," for brother; "Eagle," for his initials EGL, and "Bigote." which he says is "Tagalog for mustache."
33. Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, p. 2. Douglas Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era: U.S. Doctrine and Performance, 1950 to the Present* (New York: Free Press, 1977), p. 38, cites the scope of Lansdale's brief as an indicator of his association with the C IA.
34. Charles Bohannan and Napoleon Valeriano, *Counter guerrilla Operations: The Philippines Experience*, was one of the Praeger counterinsurgency series. A wealth of information on unconventional warfare, as well as Ott his and Lansdale's role in the Philippines, Vietnam, and elsewhere can be found in the collection of Charles Bohannan's papers held at the Hoover Institution Archive at Stanford.
35. Lansdale, in the draft manuscript for *In the Midst of Wars* (Lansdale Papers, Hoover Intitution Archive), credits Bohannan's group with scouting the island of Leyte while still under occupation and with blocking key passes at the time of the Allied landing on Luzon.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Pentagon Papers (Senator Gravel Edition)*, vol. 1, pp. 576, 581. Correspondence and documettts on "Operation Brotherhood," the "Freedom Company," and "The Technical Serviccs Company" are included in the Bohannan Papers and Lansdale Papers at the Hoover Archive. The Bohannan Papers (Hoover Archives, 130x 17) include Bohannan's "Freedom Company" identity card and photographs of Camp Batson with the "Freedom Company" signpost.
38. Bohannan "has been instrumental in extending United States ideals and methods of combatting Communism, through the use of Asian nationals, into several other

Asian countries." Memorandum, Gen Lansdale, 16 May 1955, Subject: Major Charles T. R. Bohannon (Lansdale Papers, Hoover Archive, Box 35).

39. Bohannon, Draft Questions Outline of Significant Factors (1964), p. 111-4-2. Charles Bohannon, "Draft. Question outline of significant factors affecting the US advisory role in Philippine actions countering the Hukbalahap insurgency," p. 1114-2, Bohannon Papers (12-16 December 1964), Hoover Archive, Box 8.
40. *Ibid.*
41. Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, p. 10. The response described was of course gratifying; it seemed everyone had once known a good old boy from America, and an anti-imperialist orator slunk away in defeat.
42. *Ibid*, p. 36.
43. Bohannon, "Draft. Question outline of significant factors . . . ' (1964), p. 111-4-3.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 111-4-2.
45. Ferrer was assassinated in 1987; although the victim was a declared target of the New People's Army, the killer was allegedly a disgruntled public employee.
46. Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, p. 104, says he was "surprised" to hear rumors that he had "given Magsaysay three million dollars for his campaign," when actually he was operating on "a tiny budget of government and personal funds," and "close to being flat broke."
47. Raymond Bonner, *Waltzing with a Dictator* (New York: Times Books, 1987) p 39, citing an interview by Thomas Buell with Lansdale on the \$5 million; and his own interview with Lansdale on his role in "arm-twisting" businesses (the Coca Cola franchise was, according to Lansdale, a "big contributor").
48. Bonner, *Waltzing*, p. 39, citing a 1972 interview with Lovett by Thomas Buell, on file in the Naval Historical Collection at the Naval War College.
49. "Philippine Election Prospects," CIA, Office of Current Intelligence, National Intelligence Weekly, 6 November 1953. Declassified Documents Reference Collection (1986:000014): "If the election is patently dishonest, it may well deal a death blow to democratic processes in the Philippines and would greatly facilitate a Huk resurgence.... For the United States, it would mean a serious loss of prestige in Southeast Asia, where a well-governed Philippines could provide an example in democracy."
50. A critical view of the American role in orchestrating Magsaysay's political career is in Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency in the Philippines," pp. 120-23
51. In a "bull session" with officers at the Army Staff College, Lansdale prefaces his remarks on some of the more bizarre psy-war initiatives taken in the Philippines by observing that Magsaysay himself was frightened of "ghosts. Captain William W. Whitson, Department of Social Sciences, War College, Memorandum for the Record: Subject: Informal Discussion with Col. Lansdale, USAF, and Col. Valeriano, Philippine Military Attache, 22 February 1957 (27 February). Lansdale Papers, Box

- 12 (Collected Speeches and Writings), Hoover Archive. The account illustrates the importance of personal contact in the dissemination of practical experience. The chat with officers of the Social Sciences department on "Military Policy in Underdeveloped Areas" lasted from 8:30 P.M. to midnight, Captains Whitson and Nye continued the discussion with Lansdale until 4:30 the next morning. Captain Whitson's six- page record of the discussions is accompanied by a five-page commentary on the memo in which Col. Lansdale elaborates on some issues raised, and backtracks on his reticences on others.
52. Bohannon and Valeriano, *Counterinsurgency Operations*, p. 212, report that at its greatest strength, CAO personnel totaled some 200 officers, enlisted men, and civilians. In a "Lessons Learned" lecture at the Foreign Service Institute in 1962, Lansdale described setting up the psy- war structure as virtually the first step taken by Magsaysay toward taking over the Defense portfolio in September 1950, not long after Lansdale's own arrival. Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, p. 83n.
53. Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency in the Philippines," p. 115.
54. Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, p. 81; Lansdale identifies the head of the enterprise as John Broger. The Philippines of the 1990s, like most of Central America, is swamped with American missionaries of a vast range of fundamentalist groups espousing similar messages of virulent anticommunism.
55. Cited in Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era*, p. 30. Bohannon and Valeriano. *Counterinsurgency Operations*, discuss CAO extensively in chapter 12, "Target The Civilian," pp. 200-27. These authors (p. 211) observe that civil affairs officers were assigned at each echelon of command down to battalion level and functioned as special staff officers (advisers) as well as operational officers in their specialty.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 207
58. See, for example, Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era*, pp. 20-30 (see note 35, above).
59. *Ibid.*
60. "Tactical Psyop and Strategic Objectives," in Army Pamphlet 525-7-1, April 1976, p. 401. The study notes that accounts of individual abuses in the 1946-1950 period "were legion," that troops "typically foraged for supplies at the expense of poor peasants," and that noncombatant casualties abounded as a consequence of "indiscriminate firing of weapons" including the shelling of "whole villages suspected of aiding Huks."
61. *Ibid.*, p. 402. Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency in the Philippines," p. 116, cites a U.S. official who described the "free telegrams" offer as "a big publicity binge." "As Magsaysay says, if they'd really challenged him on it, he didn't have that many lawyers. But a few people did do this, and he went down there you know, peasants who had land problems—he got the lawyers to them within 24 hours. And the word got around, and they began to believe him. He wasn't able to accomplish the social reforms, but they believed that he would. And that defeated the Hukbalahaps."

62. Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, p. 52; for a more extensive account, see Bohannon and Valeriano, *Counter guerrilla Operations*, pp. 221-24. EDCOR was created by law on 15 December 1950. Bohannon, "Unconventional Warfare," in "Counter-Guerrilla Operations in the Philippines, 1946-1953," A Seminar on the Huk Campaign Held at Fort Bragg, N.C., 15 June 1961 (Fort Bragg, N.C., 1961), p. 55, describes the EDCOR plan as a proposal that "had been gathering dust . . . for several years . . . originally conceived as a modification of the old Roman 'colono' system, where troops would be stationed in virgin territory . . . and then be discharged to live on there."
63. Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, p. 53; on retired military, Bohannon and Valeriano, *Counter guerrilla Operations*, p. 222.
64. Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency in the Philippines," p. 116. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion*, p. 239, cites EDCOR documents to give a figure of 950 families settled in Mindanao; he observes that many were not from central Luzon, "and less than 250 of them had been in the Huk movement."
65. Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, p. 57; Charles Bohannon, "Unconventional Warfare," p. 56.
66. "You Don't Kill Communists with Guns Alone," in *The Dirty Wars*, p. 187 (see note 24, above).
67. *Ibid.*, p. 187. Magsaysay stressed that there were few EDCOR beneficiaries ("about 300 Huk farmers") among the "hundreds of thousands" of Huk activists and sympathizers.
68. U.S. Army, School of Special Warfare, "Counter-Guerrilla Operations in the Philippines 1946-1953," includes a copy of a wanted poster that was issued in "the peace and order drive," and offers 100,000 Philippines pesos for information on Luis Taruc, Jesus Lava, and Guillermo Capadocia; P30,000 for five lesser leaders and a general "Dead or Alive" offer of P5,000 for Huk field or district commanders, and P2,000 on Huk battalion or squadron commanders.
69. Bohannon (writing under the pseudonym Carlos Weber), "The Philippines Anti Huk Campaign," typescript. Bohannon Papers, Box 20, Hoover Archive.
70. Bohannon and Valeriano, *Counter guerrilla Operations*, p. 226.
71. Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, p. 75.
72. Lansdale, Notes for Charles Thayer re "Guerrilla," 4 March 1963 (comment on p. 40 of draft). Lansdale Papers, Box 47, Office of Secretary of Defense subfile "Requests for articles and reviews." Lansdale adds, "Of course, he was trying to instill combat spirit when he did this—not develop the political savvy on which you make your point." Thayer's point was that as a consequence of the political dynamics of counterinsurgency it took some "20 soldiers to catch a guerrilla."
73. Major Medardo Justiniano, "Combat Intelligence," in "Counter-Guerrilla Operations in the Philippines, 1946- 1953," p. 47. Lansdale Papers, Box 45, also in the files of Walt W. Rostow, Guerrilla Warfare 6/14/61-6/31/61, Box 326, National Security Files, Kennedy Library, pp. 47-48.

74. Justiniano, "Combat Intelligence," p. 48.
75. Bohannon and Valeriano, *Counter guerrilla Operations*, pp. 160-66. The report of the operation, launched before dawn on 11 May 1947, is reproduced as an illustration of "the value [of] a well planned *zona* operation. " Although the authors note the drawbacks of such operations ("however effective") in terms of hearts and minds, they note that "it will scarcely be possible to conduct active counter guerrilla operations . . . without occasional village screenings" in the absence of highly developed intelligence and communications systems.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 163. The report adds that this was a tactic that could only be used before Magsaysay took control, a point that may be as questionable as the affirmation that the atrocities were always ruses.
77. Justiniano, "Combat Intelligence," p. 49.
78. Bohannon (writing under the pseudonym Carlos Weber), "Philippine Anti-Huk Campaign, Caption Material." Bohannon Papers, Box 20, Hoover Archive.
79. "Counter-guerrilla Operations in the Philippines, 1946-1953," p. 1.
80. *Ibid.*, p. 768. The vampire story appears to have been Colonel Lansdale's favorite. Another version of the vampire story, based on a 1972 interview with Stanley Karnow, is included in Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks, *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* (New York: Dell, 1974), pp. 50-51. The story, with slight variations in detail, figures in many of the collected speeches and writings held in the Lansdale Papers at the Hoover Institution Archives, for example, the above-cited March 1960 lecture at the Norfolk Staff College, "Military Psychological Operations, Part 11," pp. 6-7.
81. Whitson, Memorandum for the Record, p. 5, comments by General Lansdale (see note 53, above).
82. Bohannon and Valeriano, *Counter guerrilla Operations*, p. 198. The same authors suggested the well-turned-out counter guerrilla should be equipped with "a few unconventional, that is, silenced, rifles and pistols" so that guerrillas could be picked off in a more mysterious manner.
83. Whitson, Memorandum for the Record, p. 5 (see note 53, above); Colonel Lansdale makes no amendment to the record.
84. Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, p. 49, attributes the concept to Captain "Rocky" Iletos; intervention in a "coffee klatch." In the draft manuscript for the book (pp. 95-99), he elaborates on their elite training and the basis of their reputation. Bohannon and Valeriano, *Counter guerrilla Operations*, p. 158, add that, in practice, teams consisted of from three to ten men, and their operations "so far as possible, were entirely covert, designed to secure information...." Valeriano, "Military Operations," in "Counter-Guerrilla Operations in the Philippines, 1946-1953," p. 30, describes their training.
85. Bohannon and Valeriano, *Counter guerrilla Operations*, p. 144. The same source (p. 85) acknowledges as "the most outstanding example" of this concept the organization of "captured and converted Mau Mau into 'pseudo- gangs' that

effectively cleared the die-hard remnants of the Mau Mau and their leader from the forests of Kenya. " This was the brainchild of British counterinsurgent Frank Kitson, who described the technique in his book *Gangs and Pseudo-Gangs* (London: Barrie and Rockliffe, 1960). While rather an overstatement, the reference serves to illustrate at least the interchange of counterinsurgent information, if not to trace a specific inspiration for the use of the tactic in the Philippines.

86. *Ibid.*

87. *Ibid*, p 147, citing a report by the first commander of "Force X."

88. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

89. Bohannon, in "Counter-Guerilla Operations in the Philippines, 1946-1953," discussion, p. 61.

90. Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, pp. 80-81, describes how he brought together church leaders with army operations planners.

91. Lansdale, draft manuscript, *In the Midst of Wars*, p. 37.

92. Bohannon and Valeriano, *Counter guerrilla Operations*, p. 236, refer briefly to this "popular organization" set up "in an effort to rally the people against the Huk." Lansdale describes as one of his team's "accomplishments" the creation of "a citizens organization that was taught how to fight legally for individual freedom and which became a strong influence from grass-roots levels up through the government" ("A Political Warfare Lesson," Typescript, Lansdale Papers, Box 12, P 3)

93. Valeriano, "Military Operations," pp. 2X, 116.

94. *Ibid.*

95. Edward Lansdale, Journal no. 17, 24 August 1947, Manila (Lansdale Papers, Hoover Archive).

96. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion*, p. 196, Citing his interview with Col. Florentino Villacrusis, 28 June 1970. Kerkvliet (pp. 196-97) also reproduces the full text of a municipal resolution of 9 February 1948 protesting the brutality of a screening operation "so reminiscent of . . . the Japanese reign of terror," and the arrogance of "the Commanding Officer of a Unit of the Philippine Constabulary known as the Skull Squadron

97. *Ibid*, p. 198, Citing a letter of Senator Pablo David.

98. Bohannon and Valeriano, *Counter guerrilla Operations*, p. 98.

99. Bohannon, "Unconventional Warfare," p. 67 (see note 64, above). There were some rather comic incidents, however, when Huk forces retaliated by fielding a company uniformed as Seventh BCT troops (and promptly clashed with Charlie Company); and Charlie Company "Huks" were mauled by uniformed regulars. Lansdale's draft memoirs of *In the Midst of Wars* (pp. 92-93) provide a full account: A Huk squadron had taken to wearing Army uniforms with Seventh BCT patches, "stole two trucks and painted them as 7th BCT vehicles, and started roaming the highways looking

for small units of the Armed Forces." A more compressed account appears in the published memoirs *In the Midst of Wars*, p. 88, which observes that "use of deception on this scale gradually was dropped by both sides after this encounter, as each started using tighter safeguards after being fooled.

100. Bohannan, "Unconventional Warfare," in "Counter-Guerrilla Operations," pp. 67-72.

101. *Ibid.*, p. 69.

102. *Ibid.* The same account of covert arrests and "disappearance" in the Pandi area with some differences, occurs in Bohannan and Valeriano's 1962 book *Counterguerilla Operations*, pp. 179-80.

103. Bohannan, "Unconventional Warfare," in "Counter-guerrilla Operations," p. 72. Bohannan and Valeriano, *Counterguerilla Operations*, p. 196, refer to another way in which the uncertainty of "disappearance" can play a psy-war role: ambushes or assassinations in which the bodies are never found (or are later displayed as cryptic signals). "Ambushes . . . are rather common. Guerrillas visit their families or their girl friends. The information gets around, and another guerrilla disappears, or he may be left . . . showing one or more knife wounds, a mystery for his companions possibly to investigate, and fall into a trap."

104. Bohannan, "Counter-Guerrilla Operations . . . ," p. 67.

105. *Ibid.*

106. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion*, pp. 124-25.

107. Bohannan and Valeriano, *Counterguerilla Operations*, p. 118. The total force levels for the five central Luzon provinces at the time can only be estimated through extrapolation. In 1954, in Lubao Pampanga alone, 500 Civilian Guards were deputized as Temporary Police (TP). See Office of the President of the Philippines Office of Public Information, Malacañang, Manila, Press Release no. 1-10-1, 10 January 1954, "RM Orders Re-examining Status of Civilian Guards, TP's; Disbands one-half of the Lubao TP's." The distinction between Civilian Guards and TPs is not specified; in some contexts the terms are used interchangeably.

108. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion*, p. 114. In a perhaps comparable situation, force levels in Guatemala's rural departments in 1960, after the reorganization of the security system for counterinsurgency, showed a similar disparity between National Police and the paramilitary, part-time "military commissioners." The department of Jutiapa, for example, had 60 National Police in 1965 and 971 military commissioners, about one for every fifty adult males. (See Michael McClintock *The American Connection 2, State Terror and Popular Resistance in Guatemala* [London: Zed, 1985], p. 66.)

109. Bohannan and Valeriano, *Counterguerilla Operations*, p. 124.

110. *Ibid.*, p. 126.

111. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

112. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion*, p. 196, citing his 1970 interview with Col. Florentino Villacrusis. He further cites a 1969 interview with Col. Jose Crisol, who became Secretary of Defense in the mid-1950s, who said the "undisciplined" Civilian Guards "contributed greatly to the rise of the Huk movement, what with all the injustices they aided in and carried out." Whether any effort was made to discipline the guards by their (regular) officers was a moot point.
113. Taruc, *Born of the People*, p. 218 (see note 1, above).
114. Bohannon and Valeriano, *Counterinsurrection Operations*, p. 127. The same source adds (p. 78) that the former partisan guerrillas of wartime provide an excellent postwar resource, "if not actually in the armed forces . . . in auxiliary, or so-called home defense units. The possible dangers in the formation of auxiliary units must be carefully guarded against; however, such potential dangers will seldom outweigh the advantages to be gained from the proper organization and employment of such units."
115. Office of the President of the Philippines, Office of Public Information, Malacañang, Manila, Press Release no. 1-10-1, 10 January 1954.
116. *Ibid.*
117. Ronald H. Spector, *Advice and Support, The early Years of the U.S. Army in Vietnam, 1941-1960* (New York: Free Press, 1985), p. 41, cites OSS records of the mission.
118. *Ibid.*, p. 184.
119. Document 95, "Lansdale Team's Report on Covert Saigon Military Mission in 1954 and 1955," undated, in *The Pentagon Papers*, Senator Gravel Edition, vol. 1, pp. 573, 579.
120. See previous note.
121. Spector, *Advice and Support*, pp. 219-20, discussed the 21 July 1954 final declaration of the Geneva conference, but does not explain the rationale for nonconcurrence by the United States and the Bao Dai government of the then "State of Vietnam" in the south. The United States did, at the time, "pledge to refrain from the threat or use of force to disturb" the agreements. Spector (pp. 303-4) elaborates on the subsequent U. S. position toward elections, and attributes the lack of enthusiasm on the one hand to a view that "North Vietnam would never permit a really free expression of political views," while, on the other hand, "many officials also acknowledged that even a relatively 'fair' election would almost certainly result in a lopsided victory for North Vietnam."
122. Document 95, "Lansdale Team's Report," *The Pentagon Papers 1*, pp. 573-583.
123. *Ibid.*
124. *Ibid.*, p. 575.
125. *Ibid.*
126. *Ibid.*, p. 578.

127. Conein's role in 1963, as the conduit between American officials urging Diem's overthrow and the plotting generals, is described in most current books on the CIA, notably Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets*, pp. 207-8. Conein's service as second-in-command of Colonel Lansdale's "Saigon Military Mission," and specialist in the "black" paramilitary actions of unconventional warfare is detailed in (Gravel Edition), Document 95, "Lansdale Team's Report," *The Pentagon Papers* 1, pp. 575-79. For reference to Conein's move to the DEA, see Jim Hougan, *Spooks* (New York: Bantam, 1980), pp. 123-38; Center for Research on Criminal Justice, *The Iron Fist and the Velvet Glove; an Analysis of the U.S. Police* (Berkeley, Calif.: Center for Research on Criminal Justice, 1977), pp. 168-69.
128. Document 95, "Lansdale Team's Report," *The Pentagon Papers* 1, pp. 578, 581, 583. The Lansdale document credits Task Force 98's commander, Admiral Sabin, with this and other "helpful actions"; Task Force 98 was presumably a predecessor of the Navy's secret Task Force 157, revealed in 1977 in the investigation of former member Edwin Wilson's provision of terrorist equipment and training to Libya. The document notes that in January 1955 Task Force 98 had become "Task Force 98.7." The location of the training site is not given, although the document refers to it in the context of preparations of a new site at Clark Air Base in the Philippines and in a different section (p. 582) places the CIA resupply centers in Okinawa and the Philippines.
129. Document 100, Memorandum Lansdale to Taylor, "Resources for Unconventional Warfare S. E. Asia" (undated, but apparently from July 1961), *The Pentagon Papers* 2, Senator Gravel Edition p. 649.
130. Document 95, "Lansdale Team's Report." *The Pentagon Papers* 1, p. 578. "Counter-scorch" is a term used in American reports on the European theater during World War 11 to describe action to prevent the destruction of essential infrastructure by retreating German forces. A "scorched earth" policy had, in tact, been put into action by the Vietminh in the 1945-1946 battle for the cities in Tonkin; On withdrawing in the face of overwhelming French firepower, bridges were blown and large sections of the cities were burned.
131. *Ibid.* p. 579.
132. Lansdale, draft manuscript *In the Midst of Wars* p. 397.
133. *Ibid.*, pp. 405-6.
134. *Ibid.* pp. 401-2. Colonel Leroy is admired for his forcefulness: "He raised and trained his OWtl troops, ran the province of Ben Tre in authoritarian style. He had about 5,000 troops.... It became a noted oasis of peace and order in the troubled south . . . with its local Viet Minh either dead, imprisoned, or taking up residence elsewhere. I he provincial economy boomed." Colonel Lansdale's first meeting with Leroy was at a fortified mansion in Saigon ("he and his troops had liked the looks of the house, had thrown the owner and his family out . . . and simply moved in" IP 398)].
135. *Ibid.*, pp. 394, 401-2. This is a classic statement of Lansdale's view that you really had to "understand" the Vietnamese and recognize true leadership, however unfamiliar its style: "Warlords or not, the Hoa Hao leaders were personable, interesting men whom the strife of internecine warfare had pushed to eminence in

a patch of world filled with rice paddies, sugar cane, coconut palms, rivers, canals, temples and pagodas. If there hadn't been a war, I could visualize them as being prosperous farmers or merchants...."

136. *Ibid.*, p. 408; Lansdale observes that the Cao Dai and other Japanese-supported indigenous forces participated in the March 1945 Japanese "coup" against the Vichy administration. The Vietnamese experience can be compared with that of Indonesia insofar as the Indonesian forces organized under Japanese tutelage did in fact provide the major nucleus of the subsequent nationalist movement to oust the Dutch (and indeed were a catalyst for the Malay independence movement).
137. Second Oral History Interview, with Roswell L. Gilpatric, 27 May 1970, New York, by Dennis J. O'Brien for the John F. Kennedy Library, pp. 43-44 (Kennedy Library, Oral Histories).
138. *Ibid.*
139. Gilpatric, First Oral History, p. 9, observed that at the time 'there wasn't any sort of body of doctrine or data in regard to Vietnam the way there was in Laos. We'd get all kinds of information on Laos, military and political background. Vietnam was much murkier, much harder to come to grips with.'
140. Shelby Stanton, *Green Berets at War: U.S. Army Special Forces in Southeast Asia 1956-1975* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1986), p. 16, describes them as "'civilians,' officers retired or put in reserve status for staffing purposes." This sort of "laundering" of military personnel for "staffing purposes" appears to be the norm for Special Forces personnel assigned to "detached duty" with the CIA, as, indeed, in Special Forces participation on such jobs as Edwin Wilson's terrorist training program with Colonel Qaddafi's forces in Libya (Special Forces personnel were awarded extended leave for the purpose).
141. The maelstrom of U.S. intervention in Laos in the 1954-1961 period is of truly Byzantine complexity. An outline of the main thrust of events, and survey of the literature, is in William Blum, *The CIA: A Forgotten History* (London: Zed, 1986), pp. 155-61. The role of the U.S. Army, and in particular the Special Forces, is outlined in Stanton, *Green Berets at War*, chapter 2, "Laos," pp. 16-32.
142. Stanton, *Green Berets at War*, p 17; the teams (initially of eight men, later of eleven) were from Fort Bragg's 77th Special Forces. American teams, which rotated at six-month intervals, "wore civilian clothing and carried civilian identification cards." This was a cause of State Department concern that, should they be captured in action (as some subsequently were), they might be ineligible for the protection of the Geneva Conventions. The American training program was complicated by conflicts with French "tactical advisory teams."
143. Stanton (*ibid.*, p. 19) identifies one as the ERAWAN program in Thailand, begun in November 1959. Some Laotians were also sent under American auspices to a jungle warfare course begun in January 1960 at the British school in Malaya.
144. Stanton (*ibid.*, p. 17) suggests that the basic military training assignment was awarded to the Special Forces more or less because they were the most convenient for the job, "since the Special Forces was trained to survive and operate in remote, underdeveloped areas and was already organized along team

lines. " The semicovert nature of the training missing and the combination of conventional and unconventional training requirements certainly tipped the balance.

145. Stanton, *Green Berets at War*, p. 20.
146. Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era*, p. 137 (see note 35, above). The American's man was General Phoumi Nosavan, who was set up in a rival government in a southern city and ostensibly led the return to Vientiane in December 1960.
147. Stanon, *Green Berets at War*, pp. 23 - 24. The WHITE STAR operation ended with the withdrawal of WHITE STAR teams in September 1962, in accordance with the terms of a declaration of neutrality agreed by the three princes of Laos in July 1962 under which all foreign military personnel were to withdraw from the country. Special Forces would remain there, however, under yet another cover, as the principal leaders of the CIA's largely Meo, 30,000-man *Armée Clandestine* throughout the 1960s.
148. Stanon (*ibid.*, pp. 23-24) dates the beginning of WHITE STAR work with the Meos to late 1961, and says that in May 1962 which a Meo training center was established, six Mobile Training Teams were assigned to the program. Stanton adds that yang Pao "relied on tough, secretly imported Thai Police Aerial Reinforcement Unit (PARU) teams to advise and direct his scattered forces....' A July 1961 *Pentagon Papers* Lansdale report defined the PARU mission as undertaking clandestine operations in denied areas," and reported the covert assignment of 99 PARU personnel "to assist the Meos in operations in Laos." "This is a special police unit, supported by CIA . . . with a current strength of 300 being increased to 550 as rapidly as possible...." (Document 100, Memorandum Lansdale to Taylor, in *The Pentagon Papers*.)
149. Stanton, *Green Berets at War*, p 25.
150. See Christopher Robbins, *The Invisible Air Force* (London: Pan/Macmillan, 1981), chapter 9, "Opium," on the role of opium in the CIA's relationship with yang Pao and the Meo. The principal scholarly source on the significance of the narcotics trade to covert operations in Indochina is Alfred McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972).
151. Robbins, *Invisible Air Force*, p. 234.
152. Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era*, p. 142 (see note 35, above). Blaufarb ascribes the operation to the community-based pattern of participation of the Meo in the American operations: "[A]ll able-bodied men who were needed were sent forward to yang Pao for training by his American and Thai allies and deployment in operations. But neither soldiers nor families were prepared to accept a condition of permanent separation, with the village under enemy control while the fighting men stayed on the other side of the line and fought. " The Meo "resistance" (Blaufarb's term) thus assumed "the character of a mass migration. If the Meo irregulars were forced to give up ground, the population . . . would flee." "It was in anticipation of such possibilities that the decision was taken at the very outset of the resistance" to relocate the population.
153. *Ibid.*, p. 143.

154. Gilpatric, First Oral History, p. 11. Communications improved after Allen Dulles left the CIA directorship in the wake of the Bay of Pigs, and John McCone began "a regular interchange" of information.
155. Admiral L. L. Lemnitzer, Chairman, JCS, Memorandum for the Special Group (CI), Subject: Military Training Related to Counter-Insurgency Matters (U), 30 January 1962, pp. 38-41. Kennedy Library, Box 319, NSF, Special Group, Military Training Report, 1130162.
156. *Ibid.* pp. 38-39. This was the first period of dramatic growth of the U. S. military presence in Vietnam. The authorized level had been raised "to 2,339 spaces in January 1962 and will be increased to 3,444 as of 30 August 1962."
157. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
158. *Ibid.*, The report includes a bibliography of unclassified articles on counterinsurgency.

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