May 2009

Assisting Counterinsurgents: U.S. Security Assistance and Internal War, 1946-1991

The Philippines and Vietnam

Walter C. Ladwig III
Merton College
University of Oxford
Walter.Ladwig@politics.ox.ac.uk
+44 (0)788 763 8540

A paper prepared for

The Miller Center of Public Affairs
7-8 May 2009
Charlottesville, VA

ARCHIVAL AND PRIMARY SOURCES

CALL	Center for Army Lessons Learned, Ft. Leavenworth, KS
DDRS	Declassified Documents Reference Service
Durbrow Papers	Elbridge Durbrow Papers, Hoover Institution Archive, Stanford
FRUS 1949	Foreign Relations of the United States 1949, vol. VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 1
FRUS 1950	Ibid. 1950, vol. VI, East Asia and the Pacific
FRUS 1951	Ibid. 1951, vol. VI, East Asia and the Pacific
FRUS 1955-1957	Ibid. 1955-1957, vol. I, Vietnam
FRUS 1958-1960	Ibid. 1958-1960, vol. I, Vietnam
FRUS 1961	Ibid. 1961-1963, vol. I, Vietnam, 1961
FRUS 1962	Ibid. 1961-1963, vol. II, Vietnam, 1962
FRUS 1963/1	Ibid. 1961-1963, vol. III, Vietnam, January-August 1963
FRUS 1963/2	Ibid. 1961-1963, vol. IV, Vietnam, August-December 1963
HSTL	Harry S. Truman Presidential Library
JFDOH	John Foster Dulles Oral History Project, Princeton University
JFKL	John F. Kennedy Presidential Library
Lansdale Papers	Edward Lansdale Papers, Hoover Institution Archive, Stanford
LBJL	Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library
NACP	U.S. National Archive at College Park, Maryland
NAUK	National Archives of the United Kingdom
Papers	*The Pentagon Papers*, Gravel Edition, (Beacon Press, 1971)
RG 59	Record Group 59, U.S. Department of State, NACP
RG 334	Record Group 334, Records of Interservice Agencies, NACP
Roxas Papers	Manuel A. Roxas Papers, Philippine National Library, Manila
USVNR	*U.S.-Vietnam Relations: 1945-1967*, (GPO, 1971)
Williams Papers	Samuel Williams Papers, Hoover Institution Archive, Stanford

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper provides an overview of "Assisting Counterinsurgents: U.S. Security Assistance and Internal War, 1946-1991" which examines the role of external support to a foreign nation's counterinsurgency operations, with a focus on American security assistance during the Cold War.[1] It develops an argument that the key elements of such a support effort are the supported counterinsurgency strategy and the possession of sufficient leverage over the host nation to bring about the implementation of that strategy. The paper has four sections. The first provides a survey of the literature on foreign assistance to counterinsurgency, noting its lack of treatment in most theoretical COIN literature. The second section introduces the paper's main argument, examining both counterinsurgency strategy and issues of leverage in inter-alliance bargaining. The following section provides a summary of two case studies drawn from Chapters 4 and 5 of the dissertation that illustrate the paper's argument. The final section provides a brief assessment of the case studies and a conclusion.

2. THE ISSUE

Throughout the Cold War, the United States attempted to lend political, economic and military support to "friendly" regimes that it believed were threatened by Communist-backed insurgency and subversion. Yet, even in cases that were perceived to be successful examples of this policy, scholars are split over the degree to which American assistance actually contributed to the outcome.[2] Despite the fact that the majority of America's experiences with counterinsurgency involve coming to the aid of an ally, the particular challenges of working with or through a partner nation are not widely discussed in the counterinsurgency literature. Instead, as Daniel Byman has noted, "Analyses [of insurgencies] are typically bifurcated into two players: the insurgents on one hand, and the counterinsurgent forces on the other."[3]

The lack of attention paid to the role of allies in the classic counterinsurgency literature can be partially explained by the fact that many of the early texts on counterinsurgency were written by British and French authors, such as Kitson, Thompson, Paget, Galula, and Trinquier, based on their experiences in the "Wars of Decolonization" in which the European powers *were* the local government. However, this lacuna has mistakenly been carried forward into contemporary analysis. For

---

[1] Walter C. Ladwig III, "Assisting Counterinsurgents: U.S. Security Assistance and Internal War, 1946-1991" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Oxford, August 2009).
[2] For example, compare divergent views on the efficacy of American aid in the Greek Civil War contained in: Robert B. Asprey, *War in the Shadows: The Guerrilla in History* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1994), pp. 515-525; Larry E. Cable, *Conflict of Myths: The Development of American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and the Vietnam War* (New York: NYU University Press, 1986), pp. 9-32; Anthony James Joes, *America and Guerrilla Warfare* (Lexington: Kentucky University Press, 2000), pp. 145-188; and D. Michael Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms: The Failure of U.S. Counterinsurgency Doctrine* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp. 166-204.
[3] Daniel Byman, "Going to War with the Allies You Have: Allies, Counterinsurgency and the War on Terrorism," (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006), p. 3.

example, John Nagl's recent, and much praised, study of counterinsurgency in Vietnam and Malaya virtually ignores the role of the local government and its security forces.[4] More significantly, the new U.S. Counterinsurgency field manual carries this error with it, assuming that a local government and its supporting ally will share common goals, priorities, and interests in regard to counterinsurgency operations.[5]

In reality, the historical record suggests this is often not the case: Maintaining power is frequently the priority for the local government, which means that many of the standard reform prescriptions for counterinsurgency—reducing government corruption, ending patronage politics, reforming the military, and engaging in land reform—can appear as threatening to the local government and its supporters as the insurgency itself. Therefore, a besieged government typically has a strong interest in resisting such measures, despite their value for counterinsurgency. Therefore, despite providing overwhelming amounts of money and material to its partner, on occasion the U.S. been unable to gain sufficient leverage to compel its ally to address the political and economic root causes of the insurgency.[6]

Unlike the practical counterinsurgency literature, a number of critical analyses of American involvement in foreign counterinsurgencies have focused on the two government's divergent interests, as well as inter-alliance bargaining power and relative leverage between the two parties, as key explanations for the poor result of counterinsurgency support efforts in Vietnam, El Salvador and elsewhere.[7] It has been argued that, in the absence of sufficient leverage to encourage reform, American aid and support actually reduces the local government's incentives to change their policies and encourages counterinsurgency strategies based solely on force and repression. In some cases, this can result in a situation where the local ally is actually worse off that it would have been absent U.S. assistance.[8]

As these critical scholars rightly point out, a fundamental tension exists when attempting to pressure an ally to change policies while supporting its counterinsurgency

---

[4] John A. Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam: Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (London: Praeger, 2002).

[5] Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency Operations* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 2006), pp. 37-39, 47.

[6] This focus on inter-alliance relations between the U.S. and its client states in this project mirrors recent developments in the "new" historiography of the Cold War which recognizes that, far from being puppets, Third World leaders had great latitude to shape their own destinies and often were able to achieve their own policy goals at the expense of their great power patrons. See, for example, John Lewis Gaddis, "On Starting All over Again: A Naïve Approach to the Study of the Cold War," in O.A. Westad, ed., *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, Theory* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), p 31; Tony Smith, "New Bottles for New Wine: A Pericentric Framework for the Study of the Cold War," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (Fall 2000), pp. 567-591.
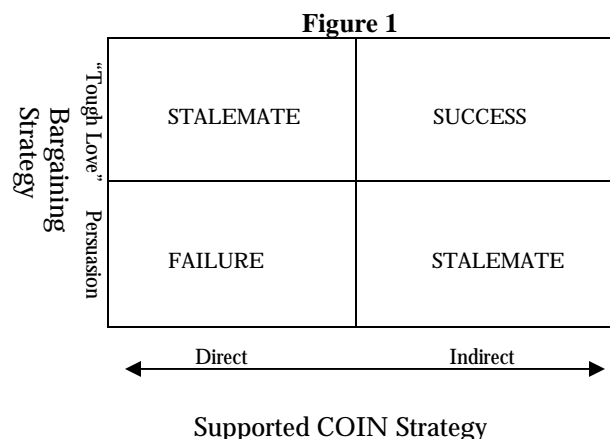
[7] cf. Douglas S. Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era: U.S. Doctrine and Performance, 1950 to the Present* (New York: Free Press, 1977); D. Michael Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms: The Failure of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); Andrew J. Bacevich *et al.*, *American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador* (Boston, MA: Potomac Books, 1988); Benjamin C. Schwartz, *American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and El Salvador: The Frustrations of Reform and the Illusions of Nation Building* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1991).

[8] See the arguments contained in Richard J. Barnet, *Intervention and Revolution: The United States in the Third World* (New York: World Pub. Co., 1968); William E. Odom, *On Internal War: American and Soviet Approaches to Third World Clients and Insurgents* (London: Duke University Press, 1992).

efforts. On the one hand, the U.S. benefits from having its ally undertake the reforms necessary to carry out successful counterinsurgency. However, due to its strong interests in seeing the ally succeed (for example as a result of a broader commitment to "hold the line" against Communist expansion), American interests may be harmed by actually having to punish its ally (i.e. withhold future aid) for failing to reform. Consequently, gaining leverage over a local ally by threatening a punitive action can be quite difficult, because the credibility of such threats is questionable. When an ally knows that, in the minds of American policy makers, it cannot be allowed to fail, the host nation government is inclined to resist any U.S.-backed reform effort that would challenge the domestic status quo. For this reason, the U.S. has often found itself in the paradoxical situation of supporting a weaker ally, over which it has little control or influence. As Ken Waltz has noted, countries that have been the recipient of extensive U.S. aid and commitments "have been no more amenable to American influence than others have been, as experience with Chiang Kai-shek, Syngman Rhee, and Ngo Dinh Diem have abundantly demonstrated."[9]

While these scholars are correct to highlight the importance of differing priorities and relative leverage between allies, they go too far in arguing that certain structural factors in the relationship between the two states will necessarily preclude a successful assistance effort—a conclusion that is not necessarily supported by the historical record of U.S. involvement in foreign counterinsurgency campaigns. In several instances, American appear to have met with a degree of success in cajoling reluctant allies to undertake reforms that, while necessary for attacking some of the root causes of popular dissatisfaction, ran contrary to the interests and goals of the state's ruling elite.[10]

This study advances the argument that effective counterinsurgency assistance can be rendered through a combination of an indirect counterinsurgency strategy and a bargaining approach that maximizes leverage over the local government. Figure 1 demonstrates how the case studies of U.S. assistance explored here could be evaluated as a product of the interaction between these two critical factors.

Figure 1

	Direct	Indirect
"Tough Love"	STALEMATE	SUCCESS
Persuasion	FAILURE	STALEMATE

Bargaining Strategy (vertical axis)

Supported COIN Strategy

---

[9] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Foreign Policy and Democratic Politics* (London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1968), p 194.

[10] Blaufarb, *Counterinsurgency Era*, pp. 22-40; Anthony James Joes, *America and Guerrilla Warfare* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000), pp. 145-208.

To develop this argument, the next section first briefly identifies the causes of insurgency before entering into a discussion of the principals of counterinsurgency as well as ally-patron dynamics in counterinsurgency. This is followed in the subsequent section by a discussion of leverage and bargaining strategies.

Before proceeding it is necessary to address two "common sense" explanations for the efficacy of American counterinsurgency assistance efforts: the volume of aid and the size of the insurgency. The first proposition can be subdivided into claims that:

1. the amount of the aid itself, or its mere provision, is decisive—a notion advanced by both scholars and insurgents[11]
2. the number of advisors deployed, which allows closer monitoring of the host nation government, is decisive—a notion supported by both counterinsurgency scholar/practitioners and the logic of principal-agent theory.[12]

The second proposition relates to the commonly cited, but empirically questionable, rule-of-thumb that the government's security forces require a 10:1 ratio to defeat an insurgency suggesting that assistance against a "small" insurgency, such as Che Guevara's failed adventure in Bolivia will be significantly more effective. As table 2 suggests, the cases studied in this dissertation do not provide support for either of these "common sense" explanations.

Table 2: Comparative American Assistance Efforts						
	The Philippines		Vietnam		El Salvador[13]	
	1947	1952	1959	1963	1981	1984
Military Aid	$37.9 m	$41.1 m	$320.1 m	$285 m	$78.2 m	$392 m
Econ Aid	$134.2 m	$229.7 m	$244.6 m	$348.6 m	$266.5 m	$410.3 m
Total Aid	$172.1 m	$270.8 m	$564.7 m	$633.6 m	$344.7 m	$802.4 m
# Advisors	20	64	900	21,000	55	55
# Local Army	25,000	56,000	150,000	250,000	20,000	40,000
Adv: Army	1: 1,350	1:875	1:166	1:12	1:300	1:700
# Guerrillas	10,000	15,000	12,000	20,000	3,700	7,000
Army: Guerr.	2.5:1	3.7:1	12.5:1	12.5:1	5.4:1	5.7:1
Outcome	Success		Failure		Stalemate	

All aid figures calculated in 2007 dollars

---

[11] James Petras, "Revolution and Guerilla Movements in Latin America," in James Petras and Maurice Zeitlin, eds., *Latin America: Reform or Revolution?* (Grenwich, Conn: Fawcett, 1968), p 353; Jesus Lava, "The Huk Rebellion," *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (1979), p. 77.

[12] For example, Douglas Blaufarb has argued that the U.S. did not have enough advisors in Vietnam to monitor the ARVN. Blaufarb, *Counterinsurgency Era*, pp. 116-127.

[13] The assistance effort in El Salvador is explored in Chapter 6 of "Assisting Counterinsurgency," but due to space constraints is not take up further in this paper.

3. INSURGENCY AND COUNTERINSURGENCY

Definitive patters of insurgency are difficult to identify. Walter Laqueur has noted that, as a historical phenomenon, insurgencies have displayed remarkable breadth:

> Some were Communist inspired, others were not; some were led by young men, some by old; some of the leaders had military experience, others lacked it entirely; in some movements the personality of the leader was of decisive importance, in others there was a collective leadership; some wars lasted a long time, others were short; some bands were small, others big; some guerrilla movements transformed themselves into regular armies, others degenerated into banditry…Some won and some lost.[14]

Nevertheless, it is possible to make some generalizations about the sources of insurgency. Insurgencies, particularly those that emerged during the Cold War, can be said to have both root causes and proximate causes. As scholars of internal conflict have identified, root causes of internal conflict typically include some form of societal cleavage along religious, class, race or linguistic lines.[15] These cleavages are often accompanied by economic or political inequality for large portions of the population and a corresponding privileged elite who seek to maintain the status quo from which they benefit. These social, economic, and political factors provide an incentive for segments of the population to favor armed violence as a means to overturn the status quo, and as such are necessary but not a sufficient condition for the outbreak of an insurgency.

The notion that insurgent movements are a spontaneous response by oppressed peoples to the presence of fundamental social or political inequality is an idealistic and simplistic view of internal conflict. For widespread discontent to transform into an active insurgency, proximate causes are also necessary. Two of the most important proximate causes are the presence of revolutionary leadership and the weakness of the state. The experiences of various revolutionary groups from Latin America to Asia suggests that the presence of what Theda Skocpol called "marginal political elites," who are willing to seek the power and status denied to them by the state's existing political and social structures through violence, are a key component in the development of an armed rebellion.[16] These frustrated elites often form the leadership of insurgent movements, even among those groups dedicated to waging revolution on behalf of the exploited masses.[17] The ability of these elites to gain support and legitimacy depends on their capacity to exploit the discontent engendered by the insurgency's root causes.

A second proximate cause of insurgency is the weakness of the state. The combination of mass discontent with frustrated elite leadership can be a powerful force, but it is one that is most effectively employed against a fragile government. As Bernard

---

[14] Walter Laqueur, *Guerrilla: A Historical and Critical Study* (Boston: Little Brown, 1976), p 386.

[15] Lucian Pye, "Roots of Insurgency," in Harry Eckstein, ed., *Internal War* (New York: The Free Press, 1964), p 163.

[16] Theda Skocpol, "France, Russia and China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (April 1976).

[17] Anthony James Joes, *Resisting Rebellion: The History and Politics of Counterinsurgency* (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 2004), pp. 33-36.

Fall famously remarked, "when a country is being subverted, it is not being outfought; it is being outadministered."[18]   When a regime starts to lose what Max Weber calls its "monopoly on legitimate violence" within its territory, it creates space for rivals to emerge.[19] Fearon and Laitin's quantitative analysis finds a strong inverse correlation between the capacity of a state's security forces and the government's ability to administer rural areas on the one hand and the occurrence of internal violence on the ohter.[20]   This finding echoes that of other scholars who note that insurgent or criminal groups quickly fill the vacuum created by weak state authority.[21] In considering the success of insurgents in China, Cuba, Nicaragua and Algeria, one cannot ignore the fact that the governments were either corrupt and incompetent (Chiang, Batista and Somoza) or in an advanced state of political dissolution (the Fourth Republic).[22] As Hannah Arendt noted in her study of revolution, "Generally speaking, we may say that no revolution is even possible where the authority of the body politic is truly intact…"[23]

3.1 Counterinsurgency Strategy

Throughout the historical and theoretical literature on counterinsurgency there emerge two distinct strategies that have been employed to respond to the outbreak of internal violence.[24] In keeping with the precepts of conventional warfare, the first, or *direct* approach, identifies the insurgents themselves as the conflict's center of gravity. Military forces is applied to defeat or disrupt guerrilla units, efforts are undertaken to clear their remote base areas and coercion is applied to segments of the civilian population to pressure it to cease support for the insurgency. In contrast, *indirect* approaches identify the civilian population as the center of gravity and employ political measures to eliminate grievances and provide inducements to the populace to support the government against the insurgents.

These two archetypical approaches are best thought of as alternate end-points on a spectrum, because real-world counterinsurgency campaigns will employ a blend of military and political efforts to both punish and persuade in the course of defeating a rebellion. Moreover, the particular mix of military and political measures employed by a state is hardly static. As John Nagl has demonstrated, counterinsurgency strategies can change or evolve over the course of a conflict—particularly if the counterinsurgent forces

---

[18] Bernard Fall, *Last Reflections on a War* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967), p 220.

[19] Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958), p 78.

[20] James Fearon and David Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97, No. 1 (February 2003).

[21] cf. Michael Klare, "The Deadly Connection: Paramilitary Bands, Small Arms Diffusion and State Failure," in Robert Rotberg, ed., *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), pp. 116-134. David Galula, *Counter-Insurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1964), p 19.

[22] Laqueur, *Guerrilla*, p 402.

[23] Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (New York: Viking, 1965), p 112.

[24] The bifurcation of strategies into two ideal-types is an established practice within the strategic studies literature. Moreover, recent scholarship on counterinsurgency employs this same distinction. Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons*, pp. 26-28.

are able to learn and adapt from their experiences.[25] Nevertheless, at any given time, the counterinsurgency strategy employed will emphasize one end of the spectrum over the other.

3.11   The Direct Approach

The direct approach to counterinsurgency focuses on the military threat posed by the insurgents.[26] As a result, the appropriate response is also seen to be military in nature—seeking out and destroying the guerrilla bands and their remote base areas. This approach also seeks to dissuade segments of the civilian population from aiding the insurgents by applying coercion either selectively to individuals or indiscriminately to large segments of the population.[27] In the language of economics, it is believed that raising the "costs" of being an insurgent or a supporter will reduce the overall "supply" of insurgents.[28] As the head of the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group in Vietnam argued to the U.S. ambassador in 1960: "the truth is that the population of South Vietnam, like any other, is more responsive to fear and force than to an improved standard of living."[29] From this perspective, it is not necessary for the state to provide its citizens with good governance or cultivate legitimacy since "evil governments may quell virtuous rebellions, and virtuous governments may lose to evil rebellions."[30]

There are a number of reasons why a government may choose to employ a direct counterinsurgency strategy. A government may employ force, rather than reform, to respond to the outbreak of political violence because it cannot "accept the view that it was their own policy deficiencies which drove people to violence."[31] Alternately, by responding forcefully to insurgent violence, a government may seek to signal its resolve to both the insurgents and the population.[32] Moreover, states facing an insurgency often

---

[25] Ibid.

[26] Examples of scholarly works that examine insurgency primarily through a military lens include Ian Beckett and John Pimlott, *Armed Forces & Modern Counter-Insurgency* (London: Croom Helm, 1985); Ian Beckett, *The Roots of Counter-Insurgency: Armies and Guerilla Warfare 1900-1945* (London: Blandford, 1988); Michael T. Klare and Peter Kornbluh, *Low Intensity Warfare: Counterinsurgency, Proinsurgency, and Antiterrorism in the Eighties* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988).

[27] Harry Summers, "A War Is a War Is a War Is a War," in Loren B. Thompson, ed., *Low-Intensity Conflict* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1989), pp. 37-38; Edward N. Luttwak, "Dead End: Counterinsurgency Warfare as Military Malpractice," *Harper's* (February 2007), pp. 33-42. Stathis Kalyvas argues for the effectiveness of the discriminate targeting of civilians in Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 146-209.

[28] The foremost articulation of this approach can be found in Nathan Leites and Charles Wolf, *Rebellion and Authority: An Analytic Essay on Insurgent Conflicts* (Santa Monica, Calif: Rand, 1970).
Other scholars who argue that repressive violence can deter popular support for insurgents include: David Snyder and Charles Tilly, "Hardship and Collective Violence in France, 1830 to 1960," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 37, No. 5 (October 1972), p. 527; Douglas A. Hibbs, *Mass Political Violence: A Cross-National Causal Analysis* (New York: Wiley, 1973), pp. 82-93; Kalyvas, *Logic of Violence*, pp. 111-145.

[29] Memo, Williams to Durbrow, February 25, 1960, cited in Ronald H. Spector, *Advice and Support: The Early Years, 1941-1960* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 1985), p 335.

[30] Leites and Wolf, *Rebellion and Authority*, p 150.

[31] Lucian W. Pye, *Aspects of Political Development: An Analytic Study* (Boston: Little-Brown, 1966), p 139.

[32] In a similar vein, some scholars have regarded terrorism as a signaling game between terrorist groups and authorities where each side seeks to communicate its intentions and capabilities. c.f. Bruce Hoffman and

possess weak or ineffective state institutions, which previous research indicates often leads them to employ counterinsurgency strategies based on the use of indiscriminate repressive violence because they lack the resources or capacity to employ reformist strategies in the face of political opposition and sufficient intelligence to distinguish the insurgents from the general population.[33]

Direct counterinsurgency strategies carry with them a number of risks and limitations. Attempts to directly defeat guerrillas through conventional means may actually play into their hands as it allows the insurgents to employ their superior mobility and intelligence on their home terrain—only giving battle at the time and place of the rebels' choosing. While a government may intend to signal its strength by forcibly responding to insurgent violence, a failure to conclusively destroy the insurgents can actually amplify perceptions of the government's weakness.[34]

Moreover, the intentional use of force and coercion against civilians in an attempt to discourage them from supporting the insurgents may be based on incorrect assumptions—namely that fear, rather than anger, will result from systematic repression, and that this fear will not generate a violent response.[35] Furthermore, once adopted repression must be sustained indefinitely to maintain order. As the French and Iranian revolutions demonstrate, a moderate reduction in long-standing repression can quickly lead to the collapse of the regime's appearance of invulnerability and "start a revolutionary bandwagon."[36] Even highly effective authoritarian states, such as Nazi Germany, have had difficulty terrorizing insurgents into submission.[37] Given the general weaknesses of the administrative structure of a state which allowed an insurgency to emerge unchecked, it is unlikely that the government will have the ability to either coerce the population in a selective manner or impose a sufficient level of violence to punish the

---

Gordon McCormick, "Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (July-August 2004), pp. 243-281; Andrew Kydd and Barbara Walter, "Strategies of Terrorism," *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Summer 2006), pp. 49-80.

[33] T. David Mason and Dale A. Krane, "The Political Economy of Death Squads: Towards a Theory of the Impact of State-Sanctioned Terror," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (June 1989), pp. 175-198; T. David Mason, "Insurgency, Counterinsurgency and the Rational Peasant," *Public Choice*, Vol. 86, No. 1 (January 1996), pp. 63-83; Benjamin Valentino *et al.*, "Draining the Sea: Mass Killings and Guerrilla Warfare," *International Organization*, Vol. 58, No. 2 (Spring 2004); Alexander Downes, "Desperate Times, Desperate Measures: The Causes of Civilian Victimization in War," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (Spring 2006), pp. 152-195.

[34] Carter Malkasian, "Signaling Resolve, Democratization and the First Battle of Fallujah," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (June 2006), pp. 423-452.

[35] T. R. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), p 232. Similarly, Stathis Kalyvas identifies one hundred studies and forty-five specific cases which indicate that the use of indiscriminant violence against civilians by a state provoked greater insurgent violence. Kalyvas, *Logic of Violence*, pp. 146-172.

[36] Timur Kuran, "Sparks and Prairie Fires: A Theory of Unanticipated Political Revolution," *Public Choice*, Vol. 61 (1989), pp. 41-74. See also, Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, trans. Stuart Gilbert (New York: Doubleday, 1955), p 208.

[37] An extremely brutal reprisal policy in Yugoslavia actually fanned the flames of guerrilla resistance to the point where, against Hitler's orders, local commanders felt compelled to adopt indirect counterinsurgency strategies to deal with the partisans. Paul Hehn, *The German Struggle against Yugoslav Guerrillas in World War II* (Boulder, Co: EEQ, 1979).

people into compliance with the government's wishes.[38] This poses a particular risk since even advocates of direct counterinsurgency strategies have noted that "halfway measures between precise coercive acts and 'countervalue' campaigns with high levels of destruction…run greater risks of being both bloody and vain—of stimulating rather than intimidating—than either of these two policies."[39]

3.12 The Indirect Approach

In contrast to the military-led approach described above, indirect strategies focus on insurgency as a political challenge, and as such, believe that any response to it must be primarily political as well. As Field-Marshall Templar famously remarked during the Malayan Emergency, "The shooting side of the business is only 25 per cent of the trouble. The other 75 per cent lies in getting the people of this country behind us."[40]

This approach presumes that "the mere killing of insurgents, without the simultaneous destruction of their infrastructure, is a waste of effort because their subversive organization will continue to spread and all casualties will be made good by new recruits."[41] It is this support base, not the insurgents themselves, which indirect strategies seek to eliminate or win over.

By engaging in political or economic reform, the counterinsurgents seek to address the grievances that drive support for the insurgency.[42] Reducing political violence to an acceptable level does not always require a fundamental change in the political or economic conditions that fuel the insurgency, but the worst aspects of those conditions must be ameliorated through some type of reform.[43] As a result, measures such as rural development programs, anti-corruption initiatives, land reform, broadening the government to include excluded elites, holding elections, and improvement of civil services such as medical care are a central rather than peripheral part of the conflict.

While it is still necessary to use force against guerrilla units and employ some coercive measures against the civil populace, such measures are tightly circumscribed to avoid undermining the gains made from the non-military measures.[44] Employing "clear and hold" population-based security strategies, the security forces seek to separate and protect the people from the insurgents. With an area "cleared" of insurgents and the

---

[38] Harry Eckstein, "On the Eitology of Internal War," in George Kelly, ed., *Struggles in the State* (New York: Wiley, 1970), p 186.

[39] Leites and Wolf, *Rebellion and Authority*, pp. 97-98.

[40] Richard Stubbs, *Hearts and Minds in Guerrilla Warfare: The Malayan Emergency, 1948-1960* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p 259.

[41] Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam* (London: Praeger, 1966), p 118.

[42] Edward Lansdale, "Vietnam: Do We Understand Revolution?," *Foreign Affairs* (October 1964), p. 84; Galula, *Counter-Insurgency Warfare*, pp. 89-94; Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency*, pp. 112-113; Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, pp. 117-118.

[43] Guy J. Pauker, "Notes on Non-Military Measures in Control of Insurgency," (Santa Monica, Calif: Rand, 1962), p 12; Joes, *Resisting Rebellion*, pp. 30-31.

[44] John J. McCuen, *The Art of Counter-Revolutionary Warfare* (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), p 78. For a discussion of how repressive violence will overwhelm the positive effects of "political" counterinsurgency measures, see T. David Mason, "Take Two Acres and Call Me in the Morning: Is Land Reform a Prescrpition for Peasant Unrest?," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (February 1998), pp. 199-230.

population protected from reprisals, the government can begin to reassert its control over a given area and attempt to regain the loyalty of the local people who are a critical source of intelligence.

From the perspective of a state or government, indirect counterinsurgency strategies have a number of limitations or drawbacks that make them less attractive to implement. In contrast to direct approaches which appear to offer the possibility of rapid resolution to internal violence by killing or capturing the insurgents, changing the attitudes and beliefs of the civilian population through civic action and reform can take a considerable amount of time. Furthermore, as was previously mentioned, addressing grievances so deep or extensive that they have led civilians to take up arms against the state can be very difficult or costly. Since in counterinsurgency "normal military logic is negated," conventionally minded military commanders may resist deploying their forces for population security because the dispersal of forces required violates a fundamental principal of conventional warfare, potentially increases the vulnerability of units to attack, and could be perceived to be surrendering the initiative to the enemy.[45] This discussion, of course, assumes that the government in question is willing to employ political measures to win popular support. However, the ruling elites of a developing country may avoid indirect counterinsurgency strategies because they are unwilling to change the domestic status quo, as they or their supporters are beneficiaries of their society's unequal distribution of economic or political power.[46]

3.2 A Superior Strategy?

In considering the viability of these two types of strategies, advocates can point to historical instances where one approach succeeded or the alternate approach failed. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this study it is hypothesized that indirect counterinsurgency strategies represent a superior approach to the challenge of managing political violence. This judgment is based on four factors. First, although admittedly operating in a Western liberal-democratic normative framework, a large number of counterinsurgency theorists and practitioners from a variety of nationalities have advanced principles and precepts that are in keeping with the indirect archetype.[47] These

---

[45] Charles Townsend, *Britain's Civil Wars* (London: Faber&Faber, 1986), p 31; Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peacekeeping* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), p 200.

[46] Scholars who argue that authoritarian regimes are generally resistant to reforms that redistribute wealth or political power and therefore favor repressive responses to political violence include Ted Gurr, "The Political Origins of State Violence and Terror: A Theoretical Analysis," in Michael Stohl and George A. Lopez, eds., *Government Violence and Repression: An Agenda for Research* (London: Greenwood, 1986), pp. 45-72; James M. Sloan, "State Repression and Enforcement Terrorism in Latin America," in Michael Stohl and George A. Lopez, eds., *The State as Terrorist: The Dynamics of Governmental Violence and Repression* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984), pp. 83-98.

[47] Richard Clutterbuck, *The Long Long War: Counterinsurgency in Malaya and Vietnam* (New York: Praeger, 1966); Julian Paget, *Counter-Insurgency Campaigning* (London: Faber, 1967); Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency*; Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations*; Galula, *Counter-Insurgency Warfare*; David H. Hackworth and Julie Sherman, *About Face* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989); Edward. G. Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars: An American's Mission to Southeast Asia* (New York: New York: Harper & Row, 1972); Neil Sheehan, *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 1988).

anecdotal accounts have been buttressed by detailed scholarly examination of individual cases and large-n studies, which also corroborate the utility of indirect strategies.[48] Third, agent-based simulations of comparative counterinsurgency strategies find that, regardless of the level of the population's commitment to the insurgent cause, indirect strategies are superior to direct strategies in reducing or limiting the growth of an insurgent movement.[49] Finally, the logic of the indirect counterinsurgency approach has been accepted in both military and public policy circles—featuring prominently in the doctrinal publications of both the U.S. and British armies, which caution against "undue focus on military action" in responding to insurgency.[50] Taken in isolation, any one of these types of sources would only provide weak evidence; however, triangulating the results of practical experience, scholarly investigation of historical cases and experimental models produces a persuasive argument in favor of indirect counterinsurgency strategies. As a result, this study adopts two related hypotheses about the counterinsurgency strategies employed by an incumbent regime:

1) The more attention paid to political reform, economic development and social inclusion by a counterinsurgency strategy, the less likely the insurgents will achieve their goals

2) The more voluminous and indiscriminant the use of force and coercion in a counterinsurgency, the more likely the insurgents are to flourish and to achieve their goals.

Again, this is not to say that direct approaches cannot defeat insurgencies, there is ample evidence that they can in some instances, but that indirect is a superior strategy for states confronted by political violence as they respond to both the proximate as well as the root cause(s) of an insurgency.

---

[48] Larry E. Cable, *Conflict of Myths: The Development of American Counterinsurgency Doctrine During the Vietnam War* (New York: New York University Press, 1986); Larry E. Cable, *Unholy Grail: The U.S. And the Wars in Vietnam, 1965-1968* (London: Routledge, 1991); Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); Guenter Lewy, *America in Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Robert Thompson, *No Exit from Vietnam* (New York: McKay, 1970); Chalmers A. Johnson, "Civilian Loyalties and Guerrilla Conflict," *World Politics*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (July 1962), pp. 646-661; Robert M. Cassidy, "Back to the Street without Joy: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Vietnam and Other Small Wars," *Parameters*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 2 (Summer 2004), pp. 73-83; Robert R. Tomes, "Relearning Counterinsurgency Warfare," *Parameters*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Spring 2004), pp. 16-28; Susan L. Carruthers, *Winning Hearts and Minds: British Governments, the Media, and Colonial Counter-Insurgency, 1944-1960* (London: Leicester University Press, 1995); Kalev Sepp, "Best Practices in Counterinsurgency," *Military Review*, Vol. LXXXV, No. 3 (May-June 2005); Richard Stubbs, *Winning Hearts and Minds in Guerrilla Warfare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Anthony James Joes, *Guerrilla Warfare* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood, 1996); Joes, *America*; Joes, *Resisting Rebellion*; Bard E. O'Neill, *Insurgency & Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2005).

[49] Michael Findley and Joseph Young, "Fighting Fire with Fire? How (Not) to Neutralize an Insurgency," *Civil Wars*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (December 2007), pp. 378-401.

[50] Army Field Manual Volume 1, Part 10, *Counterinsurgency Operations* (London: Ministry of Defence, 2007), pp. B-2-1. See also, 3-24, *Counterinsurgency Operations*; "Guide to the Analysis of Insurgencies," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, N.D.), pp. 12-13.

4. THE TROUBLE WITH ALLIES

Developing a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy that balances political, economic and military efforts is simply an intellectual exercise, however, if the strategy is not implemented. It is at this stage where the divergent interests between an external patron and its local ally become most apparent (see Figure 3). Many counterinsurgency theorists play down the role of allies, treating the host nation government and its supporting external powers as if they were one and the same. Robert Thompson, for example, has argued that the problems and interests of threatened governments also "apply to a foreign power assisting that government."[51] In reality, the local government is an independent agent with its own interests, goals and priorities, and the external patron has, at best, only indirect control over the economic reforms, political arrangements and military doctrines of the supported state.[52]

Figure 3: Divergent Priorities in Internal Conflict

Counterinsurgency Objectives		
	Local Government	External Patron
Goal	Regime survival	Support threatened regime
Interests at stake	Vital	Limited. The supermajority of insurgencies occur in the periphery, which is only of limited importance to the national interests of great powers.
Relative interest in defeating insurgency	Variable. Maintaining power is the priority for the local government and engaging in the types of policy changes and reforms required to defeat an insurgency could be as threatening to ruling elites as the insurgents themselves.	High. The insurgency is the primary reason that the patron is involved in the conflict.
Political objective	Maintain independence	Provide a credible commitment to ally
Preferred means	Contain violence while preserving the social and political arrangements that favor existing elites. Employ massive military force to defeat the rebels militarily. If possible, rely extensively on Patron support to stabilize the situation, without compromising domestic arrangements.	Provide indirect aid and support (military, political, economic) that avoids direct involvement in the conflict. Encourage policy changes/reforms in the local government that will address popular grievances and increase counterinsurgency capability

---

[51] Robert Thompson, "Civic Action in Low-Intensity Warfare," *Proceedings of the Low Intensity Warfare Conference* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 1986), p 74.
[52] Thomas Grant, "Government, Politics, and Low-Inensity Conflict," in Edwin Corr and Stephen Sloan, eds., *Low-Intensity Conflict: Old Threats in a New World* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1992), p 265.

All political choices require tradeoffs, and this goes double for counterinsurgency, where a government is frequently forced to make, a "choice between evils." When an external power is assisting a local government's counterinsurgency effort, it can involve "unwelcome practices and association with unworthy allies."[53] Therefore, American assistance to "counterinsurgency usually entails U.S. aid and pressure to shore up and reform an inefficient, corrupt, and abusive government; it is rare to have a morally splendid ally in counterinsurgency work, simply because morally pristine, administratively effective governments to not provide the inspiration or excuse for a guerrilla war."[54]

In intervening, the patron is primarily seeking to strengthen its client's military and political capacity so that it has the ability to overcome the threat posed by the insurgency. At the same time, it may also be seeking to send a message to third parties about its commitment to defend the client. Survival is the foremost goal of a government facing an insurgency. However "security" is frequently synonymous with regime survival, and in many developing countries, "ruling class security may well have very little to do with that of the people they govern."[55] Therefore the priority for a government beset by an insurgency is likely to be bolstering its position within its domestic society, which is not necessarily the same as undertaking the best measures necessary to defeat the insurgents. As a result, the cases studied in this project suggest that the U.S. must gain sufficient leverage to compel its ally to adopt the reforms and policy changes necessary to overcome the insurgency.

Despite the overwhelming military and economic power of the United States and the apparent dependence of a local ally on U.S. support for its continued survival, American policy makers have often found themselves in the frustrating position of being unable to gain sufficient influence over the military or government of a smaller partner nation.[56] To understand this phenomenon, it is necessary to consider the concept of commitments and how they can affect inter-alliance bargaining power.

Within international relations scholarship, there is a long tradition of viewing the interaction of sovereign states as a form of bargaining.[57] This framework can be helpful in understanding and explaining the power dynamics between patrons and client states, as well as the relative influence and leverage between the two sides. It has been traditionally thought that the "more dependent a state is on a great power for trade, aid or

---

[53] George Tanham and Dennis Duncanson, "Some Dilemmas of Counterinsurgency," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (October 1969), pp. 113-122 p. 113; William J. Olson, "U.S. Objectives and Constraints," in Richard Shultz, et al., eds., *Guerrilla Warfare and Counterinsurgency* (Lexington, MA: Lexington, 1993), p 35.

[54] Grant, "Government, Politics, and Low-Inensity Conflict," p 261.

[55] Robin Luckham, "Security and Disarmament in Africa," *Alternatives*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (1983), p. 217.

[56] Robert O. Keohane, "The Big Influence of Small Allies," *Foreign Policy*, No. 2 (Spring 1971), pp. 161-182.

[57] Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1960); Klaus Knorr, *On the Uses of Military Power in the Nuclear Age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966); Glenn Snyder and Paul Diesing, *Conflict among Nations: Bargaining, Decision Making, and System Structure in International Crises* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

protection, the more responsive it is likely to be to pressure."[58] In this vein, numerous scholars report that throughout the Cold War, American policy-makers persistently expected that dependence on U.S. aid would necessarily translate into influence over the policies of the recipient state.[59]

However the historical record suggests that these assumptions lack a solid empirical foundation.[60] Indeed, it has been found that the provision of significant amounts of military or economic aid to a client state does not necessarily translate into considerable leverage over the client's behavior, and that on occasion it appears that "the tail wags the dog."[61] Ulf Lindell and Stefan Persson have gone so far as to term the "paradoxical" phenomenon of great powers being unable to get their way with smaller ones, or even being influenced by them in return, "a genuine puzzle."[62]

4.1 The Commitment Trap

In situations ranging from extended deterrence to economic negotiations, states make commitments to signal their intentions to adversaries and allies alike. Having staked its prestige, honor and reputation on the survival of the client state, a supporting

---

[58] Robert Keohane, "Political Influence in the General Assembly," *International Conciliation*, No. 557 (1966), p. 18. Works advancing this argument include, Albert Hirschman, *National Power and the Structure of Foreign Trade* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1945); Joan Nelson, *Aid, Influence and Foreign Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1968); Adrienne Armstrong, "The Political Consequences of Economic Dependence," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (1981), pp. 401-428; Christopher Shoemaker and John Spanier, *Patron-Client State Relationships: Multilateral Crises in the Nuclear Age* (New York: Praeger, 1984), p 15.

[59] Richard W. Cottam, *Competitive Interference and Twentieth Century Diplomacy* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1967), p 59; Roger P. Labrie *et al.*, *U.S. Arms Sales Policy: Background and Issues* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1982), p 67; Barry M. Blechman *et al.*, "Negotiated Limitations on Arms Transfers: First Steps Towards Crisis Prevention?," in Alexander L. George, ed., *Managing U.S.-Soviet Rivalry: Problems of Crisis Prevention* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1983), p 257; Michael T. Klare, *American Arms Supermarket* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984), p 30; Nitza Nachimas, *Transfer of Arms, Leverage and Peace in the Middle East* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1988), pp. 1-2; Keith Krause, "Military Statecraft: Power and Influence in Soviet and American Arms Transfer Relationships," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (1991), pp. 313-336 p. 314; T.V. Paul, "Influence through Arms Transfers: Lessons from the U.S.-Pakistani Relationship," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 32, No. 12 (December 1992), p. 1078.

[60] Klaus Knorr, *The Power of Nations: The Political Economy of International Relations* (New York: Basic Books, 1975), pp. 180-187; Richard Betts, "The Tragicomedy of Arms Trade Control," *International Security*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Summer 1980), pp. 80-110 p. 100.

[61] Knorr, *Power of Nations*, pp. 181-183; Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), pp. 43-44; Nachimas, *Transfer*, p 3; William Mott, *United States Military Assistance: An Empirical Perspective* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2002), pp. 14-15; Michael Handel, "Does the Dog Wag the Tail or Vice Versa? Patron-Client Relations," *The Jerusalem Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (1982), pp. 24-35; Keohane, "Big Influence."; Zeev Moaz, "Power Capabilities and Paradoxical Conflict Outcomes," *World Politics*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (January 1989), pp. 241-245; Jacob Bercovitch, "Superpowers and Client States: Analyzing Relations and Patterns of Influence," in Moshe Efrat and Jacob Bercovitch, eds., *Superpowers and Client States in the Middle East: The Imbalance of Influence* (London: Routledge, 1991), p 19; Annette Baker Fox, "The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II," in Christine Ingebritsen, et al., eds., *Small States in International Relations* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), p 40.

[62] Ulf Lindell and Stefan Persson, "The Paradox of Weak State Power," *International Relations: Contemporary Theory and Practice* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 1989), p 287.

power cannot easily abandon its commitment without significantly harming its credibility.[63] Such a firm, unambiguous commitment may have a very positive effect in instances of extended deterrence, where an aggressor state may perceive the patron to be more resolved to defend its client due to the harm it will suffer by backing down. However, because such commitments signal intentions to multiple audiences simultaneously, they can actually harm the supporting power in its relations with its local ally.[64] In particular, Samuel Huntington has suggested that the level of influence the patron has over its client varies inversely with the perceived level of commitment to that client.[65]

This can lead the smaller power to free ride on its patron, attempting to "pass the buck" for its security to its larger ally, confident in the notion that it is too important to be abandoned. It is also free to ignore its patron's requests to change its policies or threats to withhold aid should such actions not be forthcoming.[66] Should the client state not comply with the patron's request, the patron's interest in the client's long-term stability provides a strong disincentive to actually carry out any threatened punishment *ex-post*. Thus, the patron can find itself embroiled in what Hilton Root terms "the Commitment Trap", in which it is unable to withdraw its support from a small ally for fear of losing credibility, yet simultaneously it is unable to influence the policies of that ally to prevent it from acting in a way that is harmful to the great power's long-term interests.[67]

4.2 Interalliance Bargaining and Relative Leverage

The literature on alliance behavior can help us understand how all these elements come together to allow a client state to resist the influence of its patron. Glenn Snyder argues that interalliance bargaining power is a function of three factors: the allies' dependence on the alliance, their commitment to the alliance and their comparative interest in the issue they are bargaining over.[68] *Ceteris paribus*, a state's bargaining power will be superior *vis-à-vis* an ally the lower its dependence on the alliance, the looser its commitment to the alliance, and the greater its interests at stake in the negotiation.

Of these three factors, dependence is the most straightforward. A state's dependence on an alliance is determined by the benefits received from the alliance compared to those it can obtain from alternate sources. Many who are puzzled by the idea that a weak state could possess superior leverage over a strong state in an alliance focus solely on the weak state's relative dependence on the alliance for security.[69] However,

---

[63] Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), p 55; Snyder and Diesing, *Conflict among Nations*, p 216.

[64] Snyder and Diesing, *Conflict among Nations*, pp. 223-225, 432.

[65] Richard M. Pfeffer, ed., *No More Vietnams? The War and the Future of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p 230.

[66] Hans Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Knopf, 1961), pp. 545-546.

[67] Hilton L. Root, *Alliance Curse: How America Lost the Third World* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2008), p 174.

[68] Glenn Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), p 166.

[69] For example, in an otherwise excellent analysis of the U.S. Army's role in supporting allied counterinsurgency efforts, Stephen Hosmer makes the assumption that an ally's dependence translates into

even if one believes that "the more dependent one's partner, the greater one's power over it," the effect of dependence can be mitigated by the other two factors.[70]

The more firmly committed a party is to an alliance, the less credible its threats to withdrawal support to its allies are, and therefore the weaker its bargaining position. This is one area where the asymmetry in power can benefit the bargaining position of the weaker ally. During the Cold War, various leaders of the United States believed it was in their strategic interest to defend free nations and "draw a line in the sand" against Communist expansion. This broader strategic interest provided the U.S. with strong incentives to ensure the continued existence and independence of its allies. However, by virtue of their relative weakness, those same allies didn't necessarily feel that they needed to take actions to preserve their stronger partner.[71] When a great power declares that it is willing to "pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship" on your behalf, the logical thing to do is to sit back and let the ally do the work. When partnered with a stronger ally who has global commitments and interests in the preservation of the alliance, the relatively lower level of commitment (and lack of global interests) by the weaker ally provides it with potential bargaining power.

The final determinant of bargaining power is the relative importance of the issue at hand to the two parties. The greater the interest relative to the ally, the greater the bargaining power possessed by the more interested party. In the course of bargaining between the U.S. and the host nation government over counterinsurgency reforms, the ally may have strong incentives to resist U.S. proposals that would threaten its power base or core supporters. Conversely, while the U.S. wants to see those reforms made, its level of interest in the subject doesn't approach that of the host nation government, thus providing that ally with more bargaining power over the issue.

Thus far the discussion appears to support the gloomy contentions of Odom, Shafer, Blaufarb, Schwartz, and others that external aid will reinforce the regime's worst tendencies because structural factors in the patron-client relationship, such as the asymmetry of interests between the two states, will simply prevent the U.S. from gaining sufficient leverage over its ally to compel reform. However, it is important to remember that bargaining power is not necessarily a function of the <u>actual</u> levels of dependence, commitment and interest at stake but rather the <u>perceived</u> level of those values. It is possible to take actions to alter the subjective assessment of bargaining power made by one's ally. This could be the result of a specific bargaining strategy or the making of other commitments that "lock in" the party to the achievement of certain goals. The remainder of this section will examine two prototypical bargaining strategies employed in patron-client negotiations to explore the means by which a patron could manage its perceived level of commitment and enhance the credibility of its threats.

In seeking to influence the behavior of a local ally, the range of bargaining strategies a supporting nation can employ is constrained by its desire to preserve the friendly regime, which generally eliminates the option of employing purely coercive strategies that seek "to establish influence on the intentions and behavior of an action by

---

leverage for the U.S. Stephen T. Hosmer, *The Army's Role in Counterinsurgency and Insurgency* (Santa Monica: Rand Corp., 1990), p 23.

[70] Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, p 168.

[71] Ibid., p 170.

threatening him with, or placing him under, some form of punishment."[72] As a result, the primary approaches available are "persuasion" (the unilateral provision of incentives and other positive sanctions) and "tough love" (a restrained form of coercive diplomacy employing both positive and negative sanctions). While it may be said that all influence relationships contain elements of both incentives and coercion, persuasion and "tough love" do represent distinct policy approaches to influencing an ally.[73]

4.21 Persuasion

　　　　Persuasive approaches to influencing a target's behavior focus on the use of positive sanctions and inducements to encourage specific actions. Such inducements can include both intangible benefits, like political commitments and diplomatic support, as well as tangible rewards in the form of military equipment and economic aid. Incentive-based approaches are believed to increase the chances that the target will comply with the request because the reward or incentive provided can mitigate the cost to the target of undertaking the desired action. At the same time, it has been argued that it is easier, in terms of prestige, for a target state to accede to an inducement than to acquiesce to a threat.[74]

　　　　Champions of persuasive influence methods exist in both the scholarly and policy communities.   A recent study of U.S. patron-client relations concluded that incentive-based approaches are associated with "the successful use of influence between patron and client."[75] In the historical cases studied in this dissertation, policymakers within the U.S. government repeatedly advocated persuasive influence strategies, typically emphasizing the need to reassure the client regime of U.S. support or arguing that the deteriorating security situation made withholding aid or other coercive threats wholly inappropriate for dealing with a friendly government beset by an insurgency.[76] As William Mott reports, during the Cold War, the faith in the efficacy of the persuasive approach was traditionally bolstered by the twin beliefs that client states shared America's commitment to containing Communism—which eliminated the need for more coercive means of influence—and that the provision of aid would result in "a powerful ability to influence the actions and policies of U.S. recipients."[77]

---

[72] Klaus Knorr, "International Economic Leverage and Its Uses," in Klaus Knorr and Frank Trager, ed., *Economic Issues and National Security* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1977), p 102. For similar views, see David A. Baldwin, "The Power of Positive Sanctions," *World Politics*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (1971), pp. 19-38 pp. 32-33; K. J. Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977), p 179; Bercovitch, "Superpowers," p 15.
[73] Richard Ned Lebow, *The Art of Bargaining* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p 72.
[74] Schelling, *Arms*, pp. 70-78.
[75] Joseph Helman, "The Politics of Patron-Client State Relationships: The United States and Israel, 1948-1992," (Doctoral Dissertation, The George Washington University, 2002), p 316. Similarly, Nachimas reports that the U.S. has also employed a strategy of unilateral aid during the 1980s in its efforts to induce Israel to make peace in the Middle East. Nachimas, *Transfer*, p 6.
[76] For a sample of these arguments in the context of Vietnam, see FRUS 1955-1957, pp. 580; FRUS 1961, pp. 92-115, 140-3, 158-9; *USVNR*, pp. 136-7.
[77] Mott, *U.S. Military Assistance*, pp. 66, 307.

4.22 Tough Love

The alternate approach available to policymakers seeking to influence a wayward client state is what I term "tough love." In contrast to the persuasive approach, which relies solely on positive inducements, "tough love" blends positive sanctions with threats to suspend or withhold assistance. The latter measure is necessary as a result of the potential diminishing utility of foreign aid for generating influence. As George Kennan pointed out, "we must recognize a sad and curious fact of human nature: namely that favors granted habitually or unduly prolonged, cease with time to be regarded by the recipients as favors at all and come to be regarded by them as rights."[78] Since the client state already expects U.S. assistance and support as part of the commitment to defend it, there is reason to believe that positive inducements alone may generate little influence over the local government.

Instead, this approach seeks to obtain influence by providing the local ally with genuine rewards for its actions while also identifying consequences for its failure to act.[79] As numerous scholars have pointed out, if the client expects assistance, the withholding of such aid can be viewed as a form of punishment.[80] In keeping with the findings of prospect theory, Harrison Wagner argues that a state is more likely to be swayed by the potential loss (or withholding) of something it values than it would be by the promise of a good of equal value.[81]

As the previous discussion of leverage, commitments and client expectations indicates, to have any affect on the client government, it will be necessary for the patron to take steps to enhance the credibility of its threat to withhold aid.[82] The rewards or positive inducements provided to an ally under a "tough love" influence strategy are similar to those used in the persuasive approach. The primary difference is in the delivery. In a persuasive strategy, inducements are provided *ex ante*—at the time the client agrees to take a certain action or even as an inducement to an agreement—whereas in "tough love" ex-post conditionality is attached to the aid which is only delivered once the client government executes the given action. (For the logic of ex-post conditionality see "Ex-Post Conditionality and Patron-Client Relations" below). By attaching

---

[78] George Kennan, *Realities of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Norton, 1966), p 55.

[79] Scholars emphasizing the need to mix threats and inducements include, J. David Singer, "Inter-Nation Influence: A Formal Model," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 57, No. 2 (June 1963), pp. 420-430 pp. 426-427; Alexander George, "The Development of Doctrine and Strategy," in Alexander George, et al., eds., *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy: Laos, Cuba, Vietnam* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971), pp. 25-26; Baldwin, "Positive Sanctions," pp. 23,31; Alexander George and Richard Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), pp. 604-610; Holsti, *International Politics*, pp. 167-168; David A. Baldwin, "Power Analysis and World Politics: New Trends Versus Old Tendencies," *World Politics*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (1979), p. 192; Robert Jervis, "Deterrence Theory Revisited," *World Politics*, Vol. 31, No.??? (January 1979), pp. 304-305; Shoemaker and Spanier, *Patron-Client*, p 20.

[80] Thomas C. Schelling, *Strategies of Commitment and Other Essays* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2006), p 8; Baldwin, "Positive Sanctions," p. 23; Blechman *et al.*, "Negotiated Limitations," p 225.

[81] R. Harrison Wagner, "Economic Interdependence, Bargaining Power and Political Influence," *International Organization*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (1988), pp. 461-483 pp. 479-480.

[82] Singer, "Inter-Nation Influence," p. 427; Richard Rosecrance, "Reward, Punishment and Interdependence," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (1981), p. 40; Schelling, *Strategies of Commitment*, p 3.

conditions to aid, the supporting power makes an implicit threat to withhold this aid should the local government not execute the given task.

4.23 Ex-post Conditionality and Patron-Client Relations

In order to influence its local ally, the great power will have to alter the balance of bargaining power on the specific issue in its favor. This will require convincing the other side of its willingness and ability to carry out an actual or implied threat. A parallel to the problem of how to gain sufficient leverage to induce a policy change in a counterinsurgency exists in the field of political economy where a number of scholars have studied development aid and the use of loan conditionality by international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. IFIs attempt to encourage policy reforms in the economies of developing nations by linking loans or aid to specific reforms. Future lending or aid becomes conditional on the implementation of these reforms. To facilitate enforcement, loans are often tranched—paid in installments so that payments can be kept conditional on actions for a longer period—with later tranches withheld if the loan conditions are not being met.[83]

The reason that conditionality has proved necessary to encourage reform is similar to the need for leverage in counterinsurgency: Leaders of the recipient states are not necessarily seeking to maximize the welfare of their citizens, rather they may be seeking to enrich themselves and their supporters at the public's expense—a form of rent seeking. Economic models of state behavior suggest that conditional aid can be a means to promote policy reform.[84] These theoretical findings are bolstered by empirical evidence which supports the notion that the way that aid and support is structured and delivered can make a difference. Evaluation of this type of ex-post tranching of aid to African countries by the World Bank in the late 1990s found that it succeeded in generating positive policy outcomes in the recipient countries while also reducing demands on the bank to provide aid when the conditions had not been met.[85]

In opining on the credibility of threats, Schelling notes that, "it is essential, therefore, for maximum credibility, to leave as little room as possible for judgment or discretion in carrying out the threat."[86] As a result, by clearly linking specific aid to specific actions, *ex post* conditionality appears to offer patrons a way to make credible threats to promise or withhold aid from their clients. Further, breaking an aid package into smaller tranches, each dependent on a specific action, can enhance the credibility of the patron's threat. As Schelling writes, "if [a threat] can be decomposed into a series of consecutive smaller threats, there is an opportunity to demonstrate on the first few

---

[83] Allan Drazen, *Political Economy in Macroeconomics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), p 608.

[84] Eduardo Fernandez-Arias, "Crisis, Foreign Aid, and Macroeconomic Reform," (paper presented at the fifteenth meeting of the Latin American Econometric Society, Santiago, Chile, March 1997); Allan Drazen, "What Is Gained by Selectively Withholding Foreign Aid?," (working paper: University of Maryland and NBER: April 1999), p 19. These results have not met with universal acceptance and there still remains some debate over the effects of aid on the pace of domestic reform. Alessandra Casella and Barry Eichengreen, "Can Foreign Aid Accelerate Stablisation?," *The Economic Journal*, No. 106 (May 1996).

[85] Operations Evaluation Department, "Higher Impact Adjustment Lending: Initial Evaluation," (Washington, DC: World Bank, June 1999).

[86] Schelling, *Conflict*, p 40.

transgressions that the threat will be carried out on the rest. Even the first few become more plausible, since there is a more obvious incentive to fulfill them as a 'lesson.'"[87] This approach has particular relevance in situations where, despite the immediate issue in contention, the threatening party has a long-term interest in the well being of the other side:

> In foreign aid programs the overt act of terminating assistance may be so obviously painful to both sides as not to be taken seriously by the recipient, but if each small misuse of funds is to be accompanied by a small reduction in assistance, never so large as to leave the recipient helpless nor provoke a diplomatic breach, the willingness to carry it out will receive more credulity; or if it does not at first, a few lessons may be persuasive without too much damage.[88]

Returning to the two archetypal bargaining strategies outlined earlier in the section, this study adopts the working hypothesis that the way in which the patron state provides aid has an impact on its leverage over the local government, and that the consistent use of a "tough love" bargaining strategy will be associated with generating such leverage. Consistent with that hypothesis, it is believed that leverage will be enhanced if assistance is delivered <u>after</u> a given reform is made, not before.

Having laid out the deductive logic of the importance of a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy and leverage in providing assistance to an ally's counterinsurgency effort, the following section explores the validity of these propositions in two mini case studies drawn from Chapters 4 and 5.

5.   MINI CASE STUDIES

This section briefly explores two case studies of U.S. assistance to allied counterinsurgency efforts in Southeast Asia, one successful (the Philippines) and one unsuccessful (Vietnam) to examine the interaction of strategy and leverage.

5.1 Philippines 1949-1953

The end of the Second World War found the Philippine economy devastated and its society marked by deep divisions between the politically dominant land-holding classes and the peasantry.[89] Rural unrest in the post-war period centered on the *Hukbong Mapagpalaya na Bayan*, an amalgam of a peasant rights movement and the Philippine Communist Party that had come together to wage guerrilla war against the Japanese occupation.[90] In the immediate post-war environment, the Huks, as they were known, in

---

[87] Ibid., p 41.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Brian Crozier, *The Rebels* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), p 38; Frank Golay, *The Philippines: Public Policy and National Economic Development* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1961), p 24.
[90] Alvin Scaff, *The Philippine Answer to Communism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1955), p 23; Eduardo Lachica, *The Huks: Philippine Agrarian Society in Revolt* (London: Praeger, 1971), p 115.;

alliance with several left-wing parties attempted to bring about reforms of the highly distorted socio-economic structure of Philippine society by working through the political system. Such attempts at reform, however, were met with political obstruction and physical repression by the Filipino government.[91]

As discontent mounted, the Huks began to take up arms and return to their guerrilla ways to both resist the attacks from the government and the private armies of wealthy landowners, and to seek the overthrow of the administration of President Elpidio Quirino. In the 1949 Presidential election, Quirino was returned to power in a ballot marked by widespread evidence of voter intimidation and outright fraud.[92] A stolen election perpetuated by a government that was already guilty of corruption, favoritism and abuse of power drove anti-Quirino Filipinos into the arms of the Huks.

By late 1949, the insurgent movement was estimated to have 15,000 full time guerrillas, 100,000 political cadres and over a million peasant sympathizers. Organized into company-sized units of 100 fighters, the Huks ambushed police patrols, raided towns and carried out an assassination campaign against rural landlords.[93] Displaying a relatively high degree of cohesion, the Huks were capable of carrying out multiple simultaneous operations by units of 300-500 men against widely disbursed targets.

The Filipino government initially dismissed the Huk violence as mere banditry and charged the Philippine Constabulary, a national para-military police force under control of the Ministry of the Interior, with forcibly restoring order in an "iron fist" campaign.[94] Poorly trained with a reputation for corruption and brutalizing citizens, the Constabulary's campaign against the Huks pushed the rural population closer to the insurgents as they employed collective punishment and even burned down whole villages suspected of pro-Huk sympathies.[95]

After the liberation of the Philippines, the U.S. government had largely ignored the Huks, but by 1949, the growing Huk success, compounded by the defeat of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists in China and the outbreak of the communist insurgency in Malaya compelled the United States to take an active role in assisting the Philippine government's counterinsurgency campaign. The situation in the Philippines appeared to be all the more urgent in the wake of the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950.

From the start the U.S. advocated a comprehensive COIN strategy in the indirect mold: military action had to be complemented by reform in the political and economic spheres. The Philippine government only appeared to be concerned with furthering the interests of the country's landed elites—a situation that would have to be altered to

---

Memorandum, Peralta to Roxas, "Capability of MPC to Deal with Huk Problem, August 19, 1946, Roxas Papers.

[91] David Wurfel, "The Philippines," in George Kahin, ed., *Governments and Politics of Southeast Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1964), p 698; Lachica, *The Huks: Philippine Agrarian Society in Revolt*, p 121.

[92] Jose Veloso Abueva, *Ramon Magsaysay* (Manila: Solidaridad Pub. House, 1971), p 140.; ORE 33-50, p. 5.

[93] Tel. 444, Manila to State, February 10, 1950, 796.00/2-1050, RG 59; B. J. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines* (University of California Press, 1977), p 205.

[94] Lachica, *The Huks: Philippine Agrarian Society in Revolt*, p 121; Lawrence Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1987), p 70.

[95] ORE 33-50, p. 11; Tel. 1152, Manila to State, April 21, 1950, 896.00/4-2150, RG 59; Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines*, p 227.

address the causes of rural instability. The need for both military and political action was recognized and advocated by both the State Department and the Department of Defense, both at the country level and in Washington, which allowed the United States to pursue a unified strategy and to present a consistent message to the Filipino government.[96] Furthermore, given the endemic corruption in the Philippine government, aid would be conditioned on the implementation of specific reforms, with first priority being given to efforts to improve the state's military capacity.[97] Reflecting the lessons from the recent "loss" of China, State Department personnel warned that Washington must avoid sending such a strong signal of support that the Philippine government would not feel the need to act itself.[98] Significantly, the U.S. did not deploy military advisors or trainers on a large scale as it was concerned about "Americanizing" the conflict.[99]

In return for the increased aid requested by the Philippine government, the U.S. required that the Joint United States Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG) have a share in defense decision-making, that the Philippine Constabulary be reorganized and placed under the control of the Philippine Armed Forces (PAF) and that Ramon Magsaysay, a respected Congressman and veteran of the anti-Japanese guerrilla resistance, be appointed as Secretary of Defense. Rather than push for a package deal, each of these reforms was tied to specific tranches of aid and addressed in turn. The Philippine government was extremely angry that its ally would not immediately provide it with the aid it desperately needed, and the PAF Chief of Staff criticized the Americans for linking military aid to a reorganization of the security forces.[100] However, the United States refused to grant the Philippines a "blank check" for their attritional counterinsurgency campaign.

In December 1949, the first of the conditioned reforms was executed when the Philippine government agreed to a joint military program that allowed U.S. military personnel attached to the JUSMAG a say in decision-making regarding both military planning and the disbursement of American aid. This development resulted in the accelerated delivery of the first tranche of military aid. In the meantime, the battlefield situation continued to deteriorate with the insurgents launching a large-scale offensive in the Spring of 1950 that overran military outposts and captured villages in the vicinity of Manila. Moreover, American personnel were receiving reports that some Constabulary units were purposefully patrolling areas known to have no insurgent presence to avoid combat, while it appeared that government officials in Huk dominated areas were paying off the insurgents to avoid becoming the latest victim of their assassination campaign.[101]

---

[96] For representative views, see State Department Report, "The Philippines," October 10, 1950, DDRS and FRUS 1950, p. 1487

[97] Memorandum, Reed to Butterworth, March 25, 1949, Box 5, Records of the Philippine and Southeast Asia Division, RG 59; Minutes, Interdepartmental Meeting on the Far East, April 13, 1950, 796.00/4-1350, ibid.

[98] Memcon, May 19, 1949, 896.00/5-1949, RG 59.

[99] At its height, the American military mission to the Philippines, the Joint United States Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG), consisted of 64 officers and men.

[100] Abueva, *Ramon Magsaysay*, p 147.

[101] Memorandum, Rusk to Webb and Acheson, May 17, 1950, 796.00/5-1750, RG 59;Lachica, *The Huks: Philippine Agrarian Society in Revolt*, pp. 128-130.

The JUSMAG had long argued that the primary responsibility for counterinsurgency operations should be given to the respected PAF rather than the widely despised Constabulary. Not only were the Constabulary's heavy-handed methods a source of discontent in the population, but they had been a major tool by which the election fraud of 1949 had been perpetuated. These two factors made it extremely unlikely that the Constabulary could win the respect and popular support necessary to succeed against the Huks. When the Americans first pushed Quirino to reorganize the Constabulary he attempted to placate them, in an effort to gain the tied military aid by agreeing to reorganize and then delaying implementation.[102] When that failed, he attempted a partial reorganization that left operational control of the Constabulary in the hand of the Interior Ministry, which staunchly supported the interests of the landlord class.[103] The Americans refused to give in to partial measures and insisted on full implementation of the reforms before the associated military aid was provided. As a result, in July 1950, the Constabulary was downsized and integrated into the PAF, and the next day the U.S. delivered a major shipment of military supplies.[104]

A falling out with his Secretary of Defense in August 1950 over the promotion of party loyalists within the Philippine Armed Forces and the lack of military success against the Huks, led Quirino to attempt to take over the defense portfolio himself—a move which many feared would lead to the end of civil government in the Philippines.[105] When the State Department, the Embassy and the JUSMAG made it clear that increases in military aid depended on Magsaysay's appointment to the vacant post, Quirino acquiesced.[106] The appointment of Magsaysay opened the door to a further overhaul of the Philippine defense establishment. American advisors suggested that the PAF be structured for internal security duties by reorganizing it into 1,200 man Battalion Combat Teams (BCT), a move that Magsaysay quickly endorsed. Each of the BCTs was assigned to a specific geographic area where it provided static defense against Huk violence while dispatching small patrols to detect and harry the Huk formations.[107] The effectiveness of the BCTs was enhanced by a streamlining of the PAF's command & control and intelligence structures.

Magsaysay gave high priority to ensuring that the BCTs had sufficient logistical support so that units in the field did not have to forage or steal supplies from the local population—which had been a significant source of friction with the peasantry.[108] Unannounced inspections, a purge of over 400 incompetent officers and the inculcation of the notion of service to civilians across the AFP improved the public's confidence in the military, which enhanced its ability to win the trust of the peasantry that formed the

---

[102] JUSMAG Weekly Summary of Activities, December 22, 1949, RG 334.

[103] JUSMAG, Weekly Summary of Activities, April 8, 1950, ibid; JUSMAG, Weekly Summary of Activities, August 3, 1950, ibid.

[104] JUSMAG, Weekly Summary of Activities, July 29, 1950, ibid.

[105] Abueva, *Ramon Magsaysay*, pp. 155-156.

[106] Letter, Cowen to Dewey, February 18, 1952, Box 6, Cowen Papers, HSTL; Carlos Romulo, *Crusade in Asia* (New York: John Day, 1955), p 123; Frances Starner, *Magsaysay and the Philippine Peasantry* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1961), p 32; Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, p 43.

[107] Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, p 20.

[108] Napoleon D. Valeriano and Charles T.R. Bohannan, *Counter-Guerrilla Operations: The Philippine Experience* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1962), p 208.

Huk's support base. The benevolent perception of the PAF was further bolstered when Magsaysay established a telegram service for peasants to report abuses by the military, assigned military lawyers to provide free legal assistance to poor farmers involved in disputes with landlords, and deployed the armed forces on "civic action" missions to repair roads, dig wells, and distribute medical supplies.

A key propaganda tool employed by Magsaysay was the Economic Development Corps (EDCOR) program, which offered amnesty and free land to Huks who rallied to the government's side. Although only a very small number of Filipinos actually benefited from the program, it created a perception that issues of land reform were being addressed, which stole supporters from the Huks.[109]

Although positive, these developments took time to have an effect on counterinsurgency operations. Throughout the middle of 1950, the Philippine government was on the strategic defensive as the Huks, operating in brigade-sized formations of 1,000 men, captured towns and villages—some less than 50 miles from Manila. By early 1951 the U.S. assistance program faced a dilemma. Despite Magsaysay's efforts to date, there were still abuses and corruption within the PAF.[110] The U.S. wanted to reward and encourage Magsaysay's aggressive efforts, but was worried that a significant extension of military aid might undercut the conditionality being applied in the economic and political spheres and lessen the Filipino government's willingness to undertake the tough measures required by the comprehensive approach. At the same time, the Quirino government was complaining that it was undertaking difficult reforms with little to show for it. The U.S. decided to bolster Magsaysay's efforts by providing $10 million to raise new BCTs, while maintaining conditions on military aid that was contingent on rooting out corruption in the PAF—particularly the removal of the incompetent PAF Chief of Staff, General Castenada. Further reforms of the armed forces were carried out through the summer of 1951 which resulted in the release of additional military aid from the United States. As the PAF increased in both effectiveness and size (expanding from 32,000 to 56,000 between 1950 and 1952) it began to gain the upper hand against the Huks—significantly curtailing their activities and effectiveness.[111]

In the face of an armed rebellion, the fragile post-war economy of the Philippines necessitated direct American aid to prevent its collapse. In keeping with their strategy, however, the U.S. linked such aid to reform in the economic sphere that would contribute to rural development, stabilize the economy, and reduce support for the Huks. Such measures included increased wages for agricultural workers, a more equitable income tax system, reform of the civil service, public health programs, and measures to improve rural infrastructure and agricultural production.[112] Aware of the widespread corruption and inefficiency of the Filipino government, the U.S. insisted on the right to supervise the implementation of such programs. The Quirino government publically decried the intrusive monitoring demands made by the U.S., but the Americans stuck to their

---

[109] Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines*, p 239.
[110] FRUS 1951, pp. 1492, 1510.
[111] Telegram 2318, Manila to State, January 4, 1952, 796.00/1-452, RG 59; JUSMAG, Semi-Annual Report, July 1, 1952, RG 339.
[112] *Report to the President of the United States by the U.S. Economic Survey Mission to the Philippines*, (Washinton, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, October 1950), pp. 3-5. National Security Council, "Progress Report on the Implementation of NSC 84/2," November 1, 1952, p. 1, DDRS.

conditioned approach to aid.[113] Eventually a deal was struck and reform programs were initiated, although they moved forward at an uneven pace.

As with the conditioned military aid, the Quirino government attempted to get the U.S. to release economic aid on the promise of reform rather than its actual implementation.[114] Despite the desperate financial situation faced by its client, the U.S. insisted that reform precede assistance.[115] In this manner, a balanced budget and the passage of minimum wage legislation was rewarded with a grant of $50 million in economic assistance in April 1951, which funded programs to increase the production of food and export crops, provide credit for tenant farmers and raise rural living conditions.

Given the role that the fraudulent elections of 1949 played in bolstering support for the Huks, the comprehensive strategy advocated by the U.S. included efforts to liberalize the Philippines political system. In particular, attention was focused on the 1951 elections for the Philippine Senate. Although military efforts and aspects of Magsaysay's hearts and minds campaign were reducing the Huk threat, the Americans feared that a repeat of the 1949 election would radicalize the political opposition and expand grassroots support for armed resistance to the government. The U.S. undertook a number of overt and covert steps to ensure a fair election. In addition to making it known to all political parties that it would be clearly monitoring the conduct of the election, Embassy personnel arranged for Magsaysay and the AFP to provide security at the polls.[116] On the covert side, the CIA provided funds to establish an NGO, the National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) that would educate the Philippine public about free elections and serve as a non-partisan election "watchdog."[117] The result was an extremely free election by Filipino standards, which delivered an overwhelming defeat for candidates from Quirino's ruling Liberal party. While this outcome certainly frustrated the government, the demonstration that political change could be achieved within the Filipino system was an important setback for the Huks.

In the wake of their electoral defeat, the Liberal party attempted to reverse a number of the reforms that had undercut their grip on power. In particular, they attempted to separate the Constabulary, which had been an effective tool in bringing about the political fraud of 1949, from the PAF by arguing that their consolidation put too much power in the hands of the Secretary of Defense.[118] Magsaysay's role in guaranteeing the honesty of the 1951 election also came under fire from Liberals who demanded that he be removed from office for having been "partisan" during the election campaign. The U.S. moved to diffuse both issues by heaping public praise on Quirino and Magsaysay for their role in bringing about a fair election while communicating via the JUSMAG that removing the Philippine Constabulary from the PAF would result in reduced military assistance. A further attempt to bolster Magsaysay's fortunes took place in June 1952 when he was invited to Washington to meet with President Truman.

---

[113] *Manila Chronicle*, October 15, 1950; *Manila Times*, October 16, 1950.

[114] *Manila Chronicle*, February 23, 1951; *Manila Chronicle*, February 27, 1951.

[115] *Philippine Free Press*, March 24, 1951.

[116] Cecil Currey, *Edward Lansdale, the Unquiet American*, 1st ed. (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1998), p 108.

[117] Joseph Smith, *Portrait of a Cold Warrior* (New York: G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1976), pp. 107-108.

[118] Telegram 2012, Manila to State, December 19, 1951, 796.00/12-1951, RG 59; Telegram 1339, Manila to State, April 15, 1952, 796.00/4-1552, ibid.

American efforts to ensure that reforms "stuck" were met with the machinations of Liberal party bosses who sought to bolster their own position ahead of the 1953 Presidential election by ousting Magsaysay and reappointing General Castenada, who had been removed for corruption, as the head of the PAF. If the Constabulary could not be controlled, why not the entire military?[119] As with the 1951 election, there was a widespread fear among American observers that a fraudulent result could provoke violence and that Quirino, who was standing again, had little chance of winning in an honest vote.

Aware of Quirino's many failings, in addition to his slow progress on key social and economic reforms, the U.S. looked favorably on Magsaysay as an alternate candidate. In March 1953 Magsaysay resigned as Secretary of Defense over the government's neglect of the reforms necessary to address the problems of the rural poor that were being championed by the Huks. In a deal secretly brokered by the U.S., Magsaysay was nominated as the Presidential candidate of the opposition Nationalista party while several prominent Liberal party bosses were persuaded to defect and throw their support behind the opposition. Going beyond the expression of concern voiced in 1951, the American ambassador explicitly warned Quirino that the U.S. Congress would terminate both military and economic aid to any Philippine government that took office through fraud.[120]

The Liberal party refused to back down, launching a campaign of harassment of opposition candidates and NAMFREL employees, while persisting in their attempts to gain control over the Philippine Constabulary. Quirino's government attempted to put counter-pressure on the United States by demanded that the Ambassador and other senior embassy personnel who were perceived to be pro-Magsaysay, be recalled and threatening to withdraw the Filipino contingent fighting in Korea. When these measures failed to achieve their desired effect, false ballots were prepared, gangs of recently released prisoners were recruited to intimidate voters, and Liberal party loyalists were appointed to key positions in the Constabulary.[121]

Magsaysay's dynamic populist campaign that reached out to the average Filipino was a stark contrast to Quirino's machine politics. To ensure a fair ballot, the U.S. bolstered NAMFREL and deployed JUSMAG officers and U.S. journalists as poll watchers—against the express wishes of the Filipino government.[122] The end result was a landslide victory for Magsaysay who won twice as many votes as Quirino. On the insurgent front, the combination of vigorous military action, restoration of public faith in the political process and a degree of social/economic reform undercut the Huk's mandate. By 1954, a majority of the Huk's supporters had decided to wage their campaign through the ballot box, while small bands of holdouts retreated to the rural fringes. The following year less than 1,000 Huk guerrillas remained under arms.

---

[119] Abueva, *Ramon Magsaysay*, p 232.

[120] Telegram 1592, Manila to State, December 3, 1952, 796.00/12-352, RG 59.

[121] Telegram 415, Manila to State, October 14, 1953, 796.00/10-1453, RG 59; Telegram 1021, Manila to State, November 5, 1953, ibid.

[122] JUSMAG, Monthly Summary of Activities, October 8, 1953, RG 339.

4.1 Vietnam 1961-1963

Throughout the later 1950s, the U.S. backed government of Ngo Dinh Diem was increasingly challenged by internal instability. Even before Hanoi lent its support to "armed resistance" in 1959, Diem's government faced opposition to its highly centralized authoritarian style of governance that relied heavily on a clique of family members and fellow Catholics. While Diem was respected as a nationalist, many of those around him were perceived to be corrupt cronies. The South Vietnamese government's anti-communist campaigns, which relied heavily on the use of secret police and extrajudicial powers, nearly wiped out the Vietminh/Viet Cong in the South in the mid-1950s, but also indiscriminately targeted opposition leaders and other nationalists who were not loyal to the regime.

When armed insurgency broke out in South Vietnam, the security forces were hard pressed to respond effectively. The Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), which had been constructed on a U.S. model, consisted of seven divisions and four armored regiments totaling 150,000 men.[123] The primary mission of the ARVN, as conceived by the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG), was to defend the country against external aggression. Providing internal security in Vietnam was the paramilitary Civil Guard and a part-time local militia called the Self-Defense Corps (SDC) that protected individual villages.[124] Although many counterinsurgency theorists emphasize the importance of para-military forces and local militias in counterinsurgency these forces received only sporadic assistance and training.[125]

This lack of internal security capacity forced the ARVN to assume counterinsurgency duties for which it was not well trained. The primary method employed was a conventional multi-battalion search-and-destroy operation featuring preparatory artillery fire. Although paying lip-service to the imperatives of counter-guerilla warfare, the ARVN's approach was largely endorsed by American military advisors who believed that the best way to defeat guerrillas was to use fire and maneuver to "find, fix, fight and finish" them. These operations, which could inflict considerable collateral damage on local peasants, rarely encountered VC guerrillas who simply withdrew for a time and returned once the ARVN left. The ARVN's counterinsurgency operations frequently occurred during the day and tended to avoid intensive patrolling, small unit operations or night-time missions. By late 1960 it was estimated that the VC's full time guerrillas and part-time militia totaled 15,000 men under arms.[126]

Upon taking office, the Kennedy administration was made aware of the deteriorating security situation in South Vietnam and the need to take action to prevent a communist takeover. The administration's first response was the Counterinsurgency Plan (CIP). Drawn up during the final year of the Eisenhower administration, the CIP offered the South Vietnamese Government funding to expand the ARVN by 20,000 men to

---

[123] Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, p 24.
[124] FRUS 1955-1957, p. 610
[125] *Papers*, vol. 1, p. 256
[126] FRUS 1961, #1, #9

170,000 and increase the paramilitary civil guard by 32,000.[127] The CIP also provided aid for psychological warfare and covert action against North Vietnam. In return for this support, Washington asked Diem to broaden his political base, reduce corruption, restore a coherent military chain of command and initiate civic action programs in the provinces.[128] Secretary of State Rusk instructed the U.S. ambassador Elbridge Durbrow to inform the South Vietnamese Government that continued aid was contingent on liberalization in South Vietnam.[129]

Diem responded to the initial U.S. proposal with a flurry of announcements of impending administrative reforms that would devolve power in the government at the national and local levels.[130] There would be little follow-through on these proposals, however. Meanwhile, Diem resisted the American pressure for true power-sharing in the government. As the negotiations between the U.S. and South Vietnam over the CIP drug on, the Kennedy administration was increasingly annoyed by the lack of progress, while Diem responded to U.S. pressure by going on the offensive. He publically charged that the U.S. was refusing to provide South Vietnam with the aid it needed to defend itself and claimed that Washington failed to understand the problems facing his government.[131]

Diem's continued recalcitrance paid off. Durbrow's arguments that Washington should strictly condition the military aid provided under the CIP on Saigon's implementation of key economic and political reforms came to an end in March 1961 as he was replaced by Fredrick Nolting, who was instructed to win Diem's trust by assuring him of complete U.S. support.[132] This was followed in May by a visit to Vietnam by Vice-President Johnson who proclaimed strong American support for Diem. The deteriorating situation in neighboring Laos prompted Kennedy to move ahead on aid to Vietnam despite the lack of reform. The MAAG concurred with this action, arguing that military aid should not have to wait on difficult political or social reforms.   National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM)-52 authorized military, political, and economic support to the South Vietnamese Government. This included the 20,000 man expansion of the ARVN and MAAG training of the Civil Guard. In effect, Diem won the support promised under the CIP without having to implement any of its reform measures.

Another round of cosmetic reforms in the South Vietnamese government followed the announcement of the U.S. assistance package.[133] Dissatisfaction at the superficial reforms undertaken by Saigon led six South Vietnamese diplomats to resign in protest at the clear sign that Diem intended no change in his method of governing. In the wake of the expanded U.S. commitment and public expression of support for the South

Vietnamese government, the U.S. found itself with less influence over Diem.

---

[127] FRUS 1961, pp. 1-12; Memorandum, Kennedy to Rusk and McNamara, January 30, 1961, Box 193, NSF:VN, JFKL; William Gibbons, *The U.S. Government and the Vietnam War*, vol. 2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) p. 13-14.

[128] FRUS 1961, p. 3, 9, 13; Moyar, *Triumph Forsaken*, p. 440, n. 10. Details on the political proposals are contained in FRUS 1958-1960, pp. 575-579, 707-711, 739-741.

[129] Telegram 1054, State to Saigon, February 3, 1961, 751K.00/2-361, RG 59.

[130] Airpouch G-309, Saigon to State, January 30, 1961, 751K.00/1-3061, ibid.; FRUS 1961, pp. 29-30.

[131] Telegram 1599, Saigon to State, April 12, 1961, 951K.62/4-1261, RG 59.

[132] Fredrick Nolting Oral History Interview, transcript, November 11, 1982, LBJL, p. 1.

[133] Telegram 1805, Saigon to State, May 29, 1961, 751K.00/5-2961, RG 59, NACP; Telegram 1817, Saigon to State, May 30, 1961, 751K.13/5-3061, ibid.

Less than a month later, the U.S. received an aid request from the South Vietnamese government asking for support to expand the ARVN by 100,000 men. The South Vietnamese military was having a hard time coping with increased infiltration of communist cadres via Laos. Once the security situation was stabilized, Diem promised, he could implement the political and social reforms that the U.S. was calling for. The U.S. agreed to finance a further 30,000 man expansion of the ARVN (bringing end strength to 200,000), but deferred a decision on the remainder of Diem's request. Officials from State and the Budget Office urged Kennedy to insist on attaching conditions to U.S. aid such as delegation of authority in the South Vietnamese government and land distribution measures that they believed would strengthen the government's political situation.[134] In a letter to Diem, Kennedy made it clear that implementation of these measures would guarantee that South Vietnam would be one of the "highest priorities" for his administration.

Diem's objections to the idea of conditions being put on U.S. aid found sympathy with Ambassador Nolting who believed that the immediate provision of aid without conditions was necessary to maintain the "momentum and confidence" of the American-South Vietnamese relationship. In response to the objections, Secretary of State Rusk decided to revise the bargain that Kennedy had offered: the military and economic aid would go ahead, but the political and social actions that the U.S. had been pressing for would be set aside to be negotiated at a later date.[135]

Throughout the fall of 1961 large-scale battalion sized operations by VC guerrillas marked a rapid deterioration of South Vietnam's security situation, leading Diem to declare a state of emergency in October. An interagency compromise between State and Defense produced a "limited partnership" approach to the fresh crisis. In return for a substantial increase in military trainers and the provision of American aircraft and helicopters, the U.S. expected to move beyond advising to exercise a role in decision-making with the South Vietnamese government during the on-going conflict.[136] Unlike in the past, this expansion of support was tied to the completion of outstanding reforms such as the rationalization of the ARVN's command structure and the inclusion of opposition elements into government. Diem rebuffed the proposal stating that South Vietnam would not become a protectorate, but the U.S. held firm on the conditionality aspects of the aid.[137] As before, Diem attempted to exert counter-leverage on the U.S., this time approaching France and Taiwan as alternate sources of military equipment and trainers. After the U.S. sweetened the deal with an additional $160m in aid, an agreement was reached by Ambassador Nolting in a marathon bargaining session. The joint agreement made it clear that the South Vietnamese government would take specified steps to increase its efficiency and public support before the U.S. provided it financial and military support.[138]

---

[134] Memorandum, Johnson to Rostow, July 27, 1961, Box 193, NSF:VN, JFKL; Memorandum, Rostow to Kennedy, August 4, 1961, Box 194, ibid.

[135] Telegram 226, State to Saigon, August 23, 1961, Box 194, NSF:VN, JFKL; FRUS 1961, p. 214.

[136] FRUS 1961, pp. 477-532.

[137] FRUS 1961, p. 643

[138] FRUS 1961, p. 714; Telegram 884, Saigon to State, January 3, 1962, 751K.00/1-362, RG 59, NACP; FRUS 1962, p. 21, p. 488.

Despite the hard won battle to convince Diem to accept strict conditions on American aid, U.S. began to undermine its position almost immediately by rushing military aid and personnel (the number of advisors more than tripled from 900 to 3,000 during 1961) into South Vietnam rather than waiting for the agreed reforms to be undertaken.[139] The improved firepower and mobility provided by U.S. aircraft and equipment allowed the ARVN to take the offensive in the first half of 1962, which put American pressure for implementation of the political and economic aspects of the counterinsurgency effort on the back burner.[140] American advisors believed that this additional aid would allow the ARVN to undertake decisive offensive operations against the Viet Cong. The VC threat also appeared to be kept in check by Diem's Strategic Hamlet program. A variant of the "clear and hold" strategy whereby areas cleared of VC activity by the ARVN would be secured through the construction of fortified villages that could be defended by the local SDC detachment supported by the Civil Guard. Civic action programs and aggressive policing in these fortified villages would, in theory, win popular support and eliminate the communists support base. Although solid in theory, the program was implemented in a haphazard manner that undercut its effectiveness.[141] Rather than securing areas with the least VC activity and then slowly expanding the secure area in keeping with the "oil spot" principle, the Strategic Hamlets were widely scattered around the country and were often focused on areas with extremely high VC concentration. As a result, the poorly trained and poorly equipped Civil Guard and Self-Defense Corps were unable to provide effective security and many of the hamlets were fully penetrated by communist agents. At the time, however, none of these shortcomings were apparent.

By the middle of the year, however, the apparent battlefield successes led some administration officials to argue that Diem should be pressed for implementation of the reforms he had agreed to in December.[142] This concern about the insurgency's root causes was coupled with a string of reports from the field on the various administrative and security shortcomings of South Vietnam's counterinsurgency operations.[143] A series of fact-finding missions dispatched by Kennedy delivered pessimistic assessments of the situation in South Vietnam: the lack of political liberalization was hurting the counterinsurgency effort, the strategic hamlet program was a "sham," and the ARVN's large-scale sweep operations backed by artillery and airstrikes were proving ineffective against the VC guerrillas.[144] The CIA reported that the politicization of the officer corps

---

[139] FRUS 1961, pp. 679-80; Status Report: Project "Beef-Up", Joint Chiefs of Staff (J-3), February 21, 1963, Box 128a, POF:VN, JFKL.

[140] FRUS 1962, p. 77, 650; Philip Catton, *Diem's Final Failure: Prelude to America's War in Vietnam* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003), p 151; Dennis Duncanson, *Government and Revolution in Vietnam* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p 326.

[141] FRUS 1963/1, pp. 298-9; Blaufarb, *Counterinsurgency Era*, p 120. In reality, only a third actually provided the required mix of security and social services. Memcon, May 1, 1963, Box 40, Lansdale Papers.

[142] FRUS 1962, p. 583-4; Memorandum, Forrestal to Kaysen, August 6, 1962, Box 196, NSF:VN, JFKL. For a further example of the expression of the need "to make a firm approach to Diem," see FRUS 1962, pp. 377-8.

[143] FRUS 1962, p. 363. For a discussion of the "revolt of the advisors," see Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, p. 78-84.

[144] FRUS 1962, pp. 781-2; FRUS 1963/1, pp. 49-62.

was hindering ARVN effectiveness, and that after the massive injection of U.S. aid, equipment, and advisors, South Vietnam was barely "holding its own" in "a steadily escalating stalemate."[145]

In 1963 U.S. policy was overtaken by the unfolding conflict between Diem's government and South Vietnam's sizeable Buddhist minority. Demonstrations against perceived religious discrimination spread throughout the country after a clash between Buddhist protestors and the ARVN in Hue turned violent. A series of self-immolations by Buddhist monks attracted international attention for Vietnam's "Buddhist crisis." Serving as a rallying point for anti-Diem sentiment, the Buddhist protestors attracted the support of students, urban elites and even some Catholics and government employees. With congressional pressure on the Kennedy administration mounting over this issue, the U.S. made it clear to Diem that a failure to reach an accommodation with the Buddhists could result in the suspension of U.S. aid.[146] The threat spurred the South Vietnamese government to reach an accord with the protestors, however, as with promises of reform in the past, implementation of the agreement was plagued by delays. Instead of reconciliation, the SVG renewed its crackdown on dissent—declaring martial law and arresting nearly 1,500 Buddhist leaders on a single day.[147]

In an effort to bring about a change in the South Vietnamese government's behavior, the U.S. initiated a slow-down of all non-military aid, while Kennedy told Walter Cronkite in a television interview that that South Vietnam would almost certainly lose its fight with the communists unless there were "changes in policy" and "perhaps personnel" in Saigon. America was sending a signal that its commitment to the Diem government was in question. Once again, American pressure triggered more promises of reforms that were not delivered.[148]

After a series of fact-finding missions to Vietnam, the administration decided to apply a more significant short-term pressure to the regime. In a series of targeted aid cuts, the U.S. suspended the Commercial Import Fund, which accounted for 40% of South Vietnam's imports and AID loans for several major infrastructure projects.[149] In addition, all aid to the Vietnamese Special Forces, which were under the command of Diem's brother and had been used by the government to attack dissidents, would be withheld until they were deployed on the battlefield and placed under the command of the Joint General Staff. It was hoped that the tangible reduction in the American commitment to South Vietnam would spur Diem to undertake the liberalization that would gain the popular support necessary to win the war. Restoration of the U.S. aid was made contingent on a host of specific military and political actions that would allow the South Vietnamese government to better prosecute the war against the Viet Cong:

---

[145] FRUS 1963/1, pp. 19-22. Telegram 1199, State to Saigon, June 10, 1963, SOC 14-1 SVIET, RG 59.

[146] FRUS 1963/1, p. 367, 383; Telegram 1199, State to Saigon, June 10, 1963, SOC 14-1 SVIET, RG 59.

[147] Message 16598, CINPAC to State, August 21, 1963, DDRS; Telegram 267, Saigon to State, August 21, 1963, Box 198a, NSF:VN, JFKL; Telegram 329, Saigon to State, August 24, 1963, POL 2-4 SVIET, RG 59, NACP

[148] Telegram 7, Hue to State, August 31, 1963, POL 26 SVIET, RG 59, NACP; Telegram 383, Saigon to State, August 30, 1963, POL 22-9 SVIET, ibid; Telegram 313, State to Saigon, September 3, 1963, AID(US) SVIET, ibid.; Message 4688, State to White House, September 7, 1963, Box 199, NSF:VN, JFKL; FRUS 1963/2, pp. 16-7, 84-5, 93-5, 144-5.

[149] FRUS 1963/2, pp. 336-346.

increased tempo of ARVN operations, employment of "clear and hold" operations to root out Viet Cong infrastructure, better training for the Civil Guard and SDC, an end to arbitrary arrests and brutal interrogation methods, a new land reform program and the appointment of opposition politicians to the government.[150]

Once again, the South Vietnamese government dug in for "a protracted war of attrition with the United States" to resist the pressure for reform.[151] As October drug on, however, there were signs that the pressure was having a positive effect. Diem began putting out feelers to gauge the American's resolve, as internal Vietnamese assessments indicated that Saigon "could not go on" without U.S. assistance.[152] When it became clear that America was standing firm, the South Vietnamese government suddenly announced that the Vietnamese Special Forces would be placed under the command of the Joint General Staff and deployed on counterinsurgency operations—a key U.S. demand. Soon after Diem reached out to the U.S. ambassador in a manner that suggested the pressure was having an effect and that he was gradually more open to the U.S. proposals. The extent of Diem's willingness to compromise is unknown, however, as his failure to build a significant support base in the population caught up with him on November 2nd, 1963, when he was overthrown and killed by dissident ARVN generals.[153] A series of weak military governments in Saigon and a deteriorating security situation in the countryside led President Johnson to commit American ground troops eighteen months later and open a new chapter in the Vietnam War.

5. ASSESSMENT AND CONCLUSION

The two cases explored here show significantly different approaches to a recalcitrant client government facing internal instability. In the case of the Philippines, the United States viewed the Huk rebellion as a challenge that's political and military roots were intertwined. This view was shared by all U.S. personnel both civilian and military, in Manila and in Washington, which led to unified support for a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy. The Americans pushed for military efforts based on small-unit action and the discriminate use of force while pressing for complementary economic and political reform. The Philippine government's initial response to the outbreak of insurgent violence was to deploy its poorly trained and led security forces in an unsophisticated search-and-destroy campaign against the insurgents and their supporters. This indiscriminant violence had the effect of further alienating much of the rural population. In the absence of a political aspect of their counterinsurgency campaign, the Philippine government ceded the initiative to the Huks, who used the government's corruption, repression and other failings to increase their base of support and expand the ranks of their active and passive sympathizers.

To compel its ally to undertake the military and political measures necessary to overcome the insurgent challenge, the U.S. strictly linked its aid to concrete "reforms"

---

[150] Ibid., pp. 371-9.
[151] Ibid., p. 398.
[152] Ibid., p. 414, 441
[153] Due to space constraints the issue of U.S. support for Diem's ouster is not taken up here.

and only provided such assistance ex post. In the face of protest and complaint by the client government the U.S. maintained its approach, refusing to accept mere promises of reform or half-measures. Such actions may appear to be highly intrusive, but they were necessary to protect the host nation from itself, particularly when the inclination of the Quirino government was to rely on force and political repression to defeat the Huks. While it has been argued that the special historical relationship that the U.S. has had with the Philippines provided it with more leverage than is normal for American patron-client relationships, the fact remains that the special relationship hardly inclined Filipino leaders to heed American advice, nor has "special relationships" with other governments necessarily rendered them susceptible to American leverage.[154] Despite these supposed "advantages" it still required constant pressure and the conditional use of aid to generate the leverage necessary to bring about a change in the Quirino administration's counterinsurgency policies.

Nevertheless, despite significant frustration with the pace and quality of the host nation's efforts, the U.S. relied on the Philippine government to carry out both combat and civic action operations while providing advice and financial support. The number of American advisors in the country never exceeded 64 and proposals for the deployment of combat troops were rejected by the JUSMAG itself.

In Vietnam, the political and administrative failings of the Diem government were noted, but significant pressure was rarely brought to bear to push the client to change its behavior. Aid programs were notionally cast as exchanges of assistance for reform, but Diem was never held to account for his failure to deliver on his promises. The ad-hoc and piecemeal nature of the American approach to Diem's government resulted, in part, from deep divisions over the best way to deal with Saigon. Some in the State Department, most notably Ambassador Durbrow, argued that the political aspects of the struggle were paramount and therefore assistance should be strictly conditioned on the South Vietnamese Government's performance; while others, such as Ambassador Nolting, Edward Lansdale and much of the DoD, believed that the military struggle deserved priority and a blank check and unconditional support was the way to win Diem's trust. This lack of a unified approach and vision allowed Diem to exploit the divisions within the U.S. government to avoid pressure to change policies or reform. In the end, the American approach favored unconditional support, but it failed to deliver results. The lack of political effort was compounded by the conventional focus of American military assistance which proved unsuitable for battle against the Viet Cong. Unlike in the Philippines, the MAAG/MACV remained focused on creating a mechanized, combined arms army for South Vietnam to the neglect of pacification missions and paramilitary security forces suited for internal security duties.

Based on the two cases outlined here, there does not appear to be significant support for the notion that the unilateral provision of aid to a client to "build up their confidence" translates into leverage as advocates of persuasive bargaining approaches suggest. In fact, as the Vietnam case suggests, it appears that the unilateral provision of aid to a client leads to a reduction of leverage over the host nation government. On the contrary, in the instances when the U.S. was able to successfully press the host nation government for action in line with the ideals of an indirect counterinsurgency strategy

---

[154] Cable, *Conflict of Myths*, p 65.

(1950 Quirino-Foster Agreement, 1961 "Limited Partnership" with Diem), it was the result of applying strict ex-post conditionality to its aid under a "tough love" bargaining approach that pushed the client hard at a time when they were weak. While the mere application of conditionality to aid will not automatically result in U.S. policy preferences being met, however, making aid contingent on the specific actions of the host nation government does appear to be a superior method of generating the leverage necessary to shape a client's counterinsurgency strategy.