

DIO

Vietnam War

Guerrillas Vs Ghosts

by

George Burns

Download *DIO 27*, www.dioi.org/jr00.pdf.

Publisher's Statement

The following paper is by a participant in the yet-controversial Vietnam War.

The author does not try to justify the war. To the contrary. Though he wishes that the earnest efforts of his battle colleagues be neither forgotten nor unappreciated, he recognizes [a] the war's futility, [b] the unadmirable factors that sucked the United States into it, and [c] the reality that had it never been fought little would now be different in Asia, other than: [1] less residual resentment by potentially vindictive China at interventionist US, as well as [2] prevention of millions of Vietnamese dead (whose names appear on no US memorial)¹ & [3] the ripped lives of even more millions of orphans, widows, bereaved parents, and so many others whose lives were saddened forever by that mass murder which is too-conventionally dignified if not glorified by a term that's overfamiliar throughout US history: **WAR.**

It is ironic that Burns was sent into Vietnam's slaughter, since his life as a lawyer has largely been devoted to seeking justice for the poor.

(See him also on slavery & other tortures at 2021's *DIO 25* = www.dioi.org/jp00.pdf.)

DIO's publisher inclines to sympathy² with Vietnam's centuries of resistance to persistent intrusion by Mongol (13th century), French, & then US behemoth-invaders from ever-remoter parts of the globe — but values Burns' more patriotic take (§§A-H) on the war, a scholarly analysis which is not only partially based upon 1st-person observation but was earned at repeated risk of sudden death, in high-tension, *real-life* combat with all-too-real bullets zinging stimulatingly closeby,

DIO readers will learn from his analysis — as well as from details of his Vietnam experiences (§§I-W). If it seems that his recounted battle decisions have a tendency to be vindicated, consider the *a priori* likelihood that a Johns Hopkins graduate (and lawyer-to-be) would exercise better than average judgement when leading relatively uneducated soldiers into combat. His intelligence cost numerous North Vietnamese lives and saved a comparable number of US lives.

In particular, appreciate the nimble move (§G2) to scrounge an abandoned base's ammunition, which soon after saved his company from sure bloody extermination. Or even much, much worse: §Q3.

We thank Kathy Laster for assistance in making this volume possible.

All figures' captions by the Publisher.

¹In 1960s Vietnam, the US' war was propping up a Roman Catholic gov't led by Diem, cheered by his wife Madame Nu & US Cardinal Spellman. As the Church tolerated US saturation-bombing of Vietnam which killed — along with pregnant victims' fetuses — ordmag a million Asian atheists and turned sections of Vietnam into lunar scenery, DR's brother suggested: if you want to get the "pro-Life" Church upset about this, have US airplanes drop condoms on Vietnam instead of bombs.

²Maryland congressman Clarence Long was a supporter of the Vietnam War in the 1960s. One evening, about the time Burns writes of, DR was driving south on Baltimore's St.Paul Str when his car was stopped by the red light at University Parkway, along with a car in front of him, which bore a Congressional license plate & a pro-war bumpersticker. Baltimore's red lights being notoriously tedious, the opportunity was too neat to pass up: DR leaped out his door, ran over to the Congressional car, and tapped on the driver-side window, asking which congressman was within. The occupant courageously pulled down his window and said in a bold voice: "Congressman Long, 2nd District". DR responded: just wanted to know, so I can vote against you in the next election since you're for the war. DR then ran back to his car which soon joined Long's in driving off without further contact. If this tiny incident had any relation to Long's ameliorating his position soon after, it might be because DR was dressed up for the symphony that night: plainly not a hippie. The message: more than draft-evaders were disenchanted with the war. (About this time, even Clark Clifford turned.) If this nocturnal impact-encounter added a μ gm to US gov't's ultimate shift against the war, it was worth it.

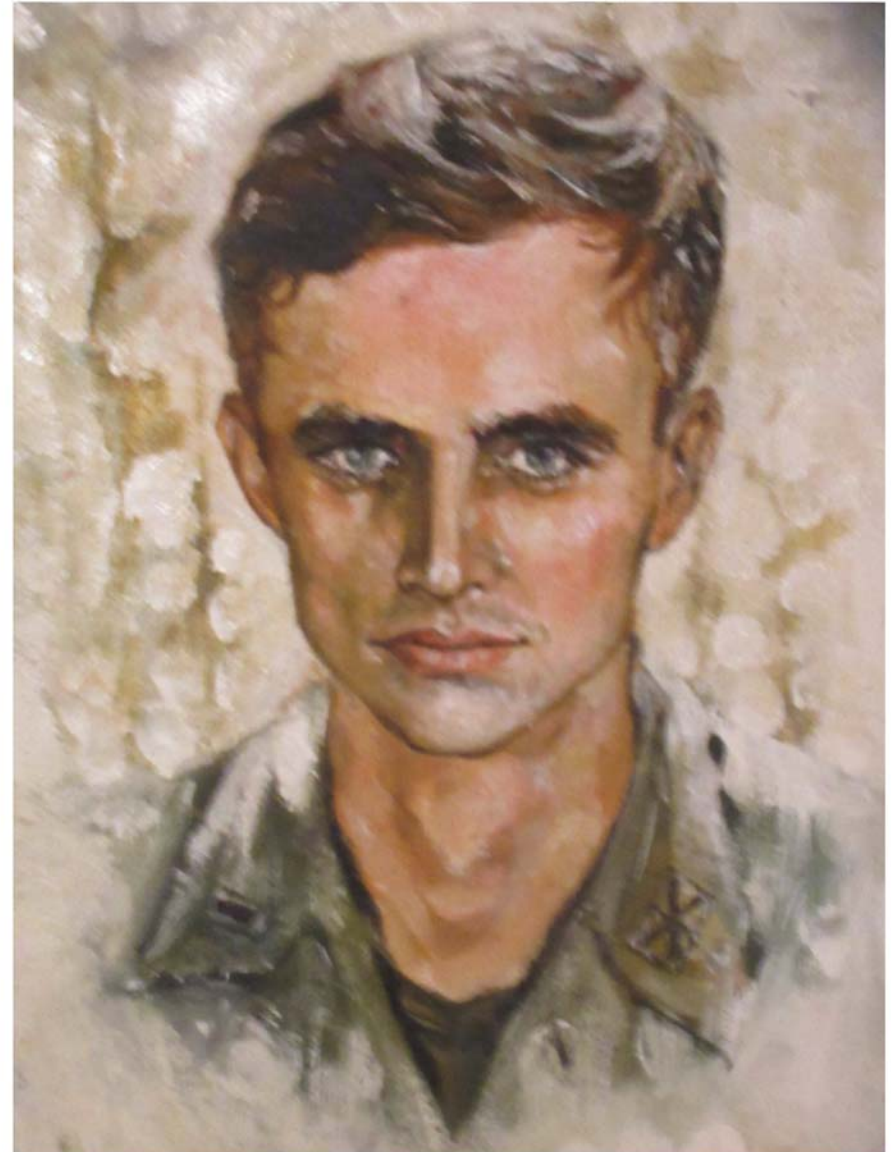


Figure 1: Portrait of Lieutenant George E. Burns as painted in Vietnam by his interpreter's uncle, an artist in Saigon, 1970.

Guerrilla Warfare in Vietnam: Myths & Realities

by

George E. Burns

A Facing Guerrilla Wars

A1 In 1961, guerrilla warfare came to mainstream USA when the *New York Times* published an extracted version of Mao Tse-Tung's primer on such. The extract, together with case studies and 4 essays explaining official and unofficial US views on the subject and on counter-insurgency were subsequently published in T.N. Greene (ed), *The Guerrilla — And How to Fight Him* (New York 1962).

A2 E. L. Katzenbach, Jr., wrote that Mao's work "is an enormously persuasive piece of propaganda, for it all comes down to this: if the leadership is capable, a war, as differentiated from an action, cannot be lost."³ It is propaganda — guerrillas, like any other combatants, may win or lose a war. Katzenbach did not further discuss the point, despite its importance to US readers. A local government when confronting an insurgency, must defeat it, surrender, or make the best deal possible. For a foreign country, the first and crucial question is whether to intervene. The decision should turn on the likelihood of defeating the insurgents.

A3 However, in the case of Vietnam, the principal discussion in the US was not whether the war could be won; but, rather what policy reasons existed to justify US involvement. For cold war enthusiasts, the problem was simple: Nikita Khrushchev had announced Russia's support for "wars of liberation" and therefore the US must aim to defeat the insurgents in any such war.⁴ Others were concerned with falling dominoes; President John Kennedy said on 1963 July 17, "[i]n my opinion, for us to withdraw from that effort would mean a collapse not only of South Vietnam, but Southeast Asia."⁵ The "domino theory" exercised an unfortunate influence on policy makers. Its power came from the fact that it was both right and wrong. Communists did believe in a fraternity of Communist nations that wanted to achieve a worldwide revolution. Reality intervened. In the 1960s, the Soviet Union and China were already mistrustful rivals. While the US feared a Communist takeover of Southeast Asia, China feared encirclement by Russia in the north and US puppets in the south. Vietnam had its own idiosyncratic problems (including an understandable fear of China). The domino theory confused "intention with probability."⁶ Still others relied on a less clearly defined national interest. Following a highly critical examination of the US's role in Vietnam, David Halberstam wrote, "I believe that Vietnam is a legitimate part of

³E.L. Katzenbach, Jr., "Time, Space and Will: the Politico-Military Views of Mao Tse-Tung" in Greene *supra* at p.19. Writers on counter-insurgency are also reluctant to admit that defeat is possible. Although, John McCuen, writing in the mid-1960s, did concede that once guerrillas have been able to establish and maintain permanent bases "the governing authorities must recognize that they are dangerously close to losing the war" and "[o]nly extraordinary measures can be expected to reverse the chain of events." John J. McCuen *The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War* p.258 (St. Petersburg, Rept. 2005).

⁴W.W. Rostow "Guerrilla Warfare in Underdeveloped Areas" in Greene *supra* at pp.54-61. Of course, given the stated positions (§A3 above) of the US & Russia, it is not surprising that insurgents would look to the latter for help.

⁵2 *Pentagon Papers* p.162 (Boston 1971) Senator Gravel edition.

⁶Stein Tonnesson "Tracking Multi-Directional Dominion" (1998) at p.34 (accessed 2012 May 2).

the global commitment. A strategic country in a key area, it is perhaps one of only 5 or 6 nations in the world that is truly vital to U.S. interests."⁷

A4 Even if one accepts all of these arguments as valid, it is difficult to see how defeat in Vietnam could serve any reasonable objective, unless one also accepts the Rostow thesis that the ultimate defeat was worthwhile because, in delaying the inevitable, nearby countries were given time to strengthen themselves and thereby prevent communist takeovers.⁸ At its core, this argument is a justification for any war or any policy, because no matter how bad the outcome, a different course of action may have produced an even worse result. Ignoring the disarray into which the Communist world subsequently fell, there is little that happened in Southeast Asia that supports Rostov's argument. In the aftermath of the war, Cambodia suffered millions of deaths and Laos acquired a Communist government. Meanwhile, events in Thailand & Myanmar have not produced democratic or stable government. Malaya was able to declare its insurgency over in 1960 with formal peace accords signed in 1989. Chin Peng, the eswhile leader of the insurgency, was able to accept defeat with much better grace than was Walt Rostow. "It is the kind of peace for my people I can accept and which I can live with some satisfaction."⁹ US participation in the war in Vietnam accomplished nothing.

A5 The unanswered question is whether if the focus had been primarily on the likelihood of success, the US would have committed itself to the war. An important part of Mao's teaching is that "a unity of spirit . . . should exist between troops and local inhabitants."¹⁰ In substance, guerrillas should be kind, considerate, and helpful to local inhabitants and should never lie, cheat, or steal. From this perspective, guerrillas seem like good democrats who want to persuade people to support them based on good works. One can almost imagine insurgent-sponsored elections in guerrilla-controlled villages.¹¹ But how well does this tranquil vision resemble the reality of guerrilla warfare?

A6 There is a difference between maintaining discipline for individual soldiers and choosing policies governing the treatment of civilians. It is true that insurgent leaders in Vietnam sought to impose discipline that prevented individual instances of the mistreatment of the general populace. Both official documents and individual recollections support this conclusion.¹² Nevertheless, as a matter of policy, terror and repression were integral parts of the insurgency in Vietnam. Killings and abductions promoted the disintegration of the government and were a means of controlling civilian populations subject to control by guerrilla forces.¹³ In South Vietnam "some 39877 of the 43938 persons reputedly assassinated or abducted between January 1966 and December 1969 were in the category of 'general populace' ".¹⁴

A7 Most writers on counter-insurgency have equivocated when discussing the issue of insurgent repression. A puzzled Roger Hilsman merely noted that based on his experience leading guerrillas against the Japanese in Burma in World War II, he doubted that more

⁷David Halberstam *The Making of a Quagmire* (London 1965) p.319.

⁸David Milne *America's Rasputin* (NYC 2008) p.250. Rostow would be a member of the Kennedy Administration and assume a major role in making Vietnam policy during the presidency of Lyndon Johnson.

[Publisher's comment: Incredibly, even the Nazis' 1942-1943 tide-turning ultra-disaster at Stalingrad — losing the ENTIRE encircled 6th Army (over-ruling any attempted breakout) — was pseudo-justified similarly.]

⁹Chin Peng *My Side of History* (Singapore 2003) p.514.

¹⁰Greene *supra* at p.6.

¹¹In Vietnam, the village was the smallest political unit. What we would describe as a village, the Vietnamese would call a hamlet.

¹²Michael Lannin and Don Cragg *Inside the VC and the NVA* (NYC 1992) p.273; Jean Lacouture *Between Two Truces* (NYC 1966) pp.179-182.

¹³Stephen T. Hosmer *Viet Cong Repression and its Implications for the Future* (Santa Monica 1970) pp.18-24.

¹⁴Hosmer *op cit* p.67.



Figure 2: Cartoon at height of the US' 500000-troop commitment in Vietnam, which was about as large as the entire French army which Napoleon took to Moscow in 1812, believing that it would be ENOUGH. *To gobble the largest empire on Earth.*

That the US ultimately sent such a gargantuan force to try subduing-controlling a tiny nation suggests that from the start US President Johnson was convinced by CIA geni that — if the US just sent ENOUGH troops — The Aggressor would give up.

And it did.

Caption: “Say — with a half million of us over here, that makes Saigon one of America’s twenty-five largest cities.”

than 10% of villagers supported his highly successful¹⁵ guerrilla operations.¹⁶ Peter Paret and John Shy, relying largely on the writings on guerrilla warfare and counter-insurgency theorists, took the position that although terror may serve some purposes, there is always the limiting risk that it will be counterproductive and alienate the general populace.¹⁷

A8 Walt Rostow was forthright but unhelpful: he noted that there was a “systematic program of assassination” as a means of forcing peasants to support the insurgents;¹⁸ but he did not draw any conclusions from this fact, although he earlier maintained that “it requires somewhere between ten and twenty soldiers to control one guerrilla in an organized operation.”¹⁹ Rostow did not suggest what effect these problems might pose for US efforts in rescuing South Vietnam from the insurgents.²⁰

B Control and Ratios

B1 US official involvement in Vietnam dates to World War II; nevertheless, 1961 seems to be the key date for US decision-making. In that year, the US military effort in Vietnam was still small, consisting primarily of advisors. Moreover, there was a new administration led by a president who was intellectually curious, skeptical of bureaucrats and who proclaimed that “the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans.”

B2 Meanwhile, what was happening on the ground in Vietnam? My-Thuan was a typical village in the Mekong Delta.²¹ Security affected every activity in the village. “Thus, health, education, and agricultural authorities confine their work to provincial and district seats rather than risk operating away from areas of military and police protection.”²² The lack of 24 hour security meant that villages did not have confidence in the government and feared retaliation if they provided intelligence to the government or informed on Communist agents and supporters. This allowed the Viet Cong to instill a deeper and more subtle sense of insecurity. “There is constant suspicion that one’s friends, neighbors, or comrades-in-arms may be Viet Cong cadres. Since there are indications of justification for this fear, one of the government’s most important means of combating the use of informers, has been temporarily crippled. Unless confidence is restored in the government’s ability to thwart the Viet Cong, it can be expected that security conditions will continue to deteriorate.”²³ This undermined the government’s fundamental objective to protect and encourage support and assistance from the local populace. “The ultimate technique in isolating guerrillas from the people is to persuade the people to defend themselves.”²⁴ The solution is easily stated, but difficult to execute. My-Thuan was in the District of Binh Mihn; in 1960 April, the

¹⁵Success is relative. It seems doubtful that the guerrillas would have ever driven the Japanese out of Burma. The Japanese suffered a comprehensive conventional war defeat.

¹⁶Roger Hillsman “Internal War: The New Communist Tactic” in Greene *supra* p.30.

¹⁷Peter Paret and John W. Shy “Guerrilla Warfare and the U.S. Military Policy: a Study” in Greene *supra* p.43-45.

¹⁸Rostow *supra* pp.59-61.

¹⁹*Ibid* pp.59-60.

²⁰At a private dinner in 1965, Rostow is reported to have said that the “ideal” ratio against guerrillas was 10-to-1, a figure the US could not meet. However, because of firepower and mobility, the US only needed a ratio of 3-to-1. David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest* (Norwalk, Rept. 1988) pp.542-543.

²¹South Vietnam was divided into 45 provinces which were in turn subdivided into districts. The districts consisted of villages which were comprised of hamlets. The village was the basic administrative unit of South Vietnam. An average village covered several square miles and was composed of 7 hamlets. Nguyen Ngoc Bich *An Annotated Atlas of the Republic of Vietnam* (Washington 1972) pp.33-34.

²²John D. Donoghue and Vo-Hong-Phuc *My-Thuan: the Study of a Delta Village in South Vietnam* (Saigon 1961) p.16.

²³*Ibid* at p.18.

²⁴Peter Paret and John W. Shy *Guerrillas in the 1960s* (NYC, Rev. ed. 1962) p.49.



Figure 3: Lieutenant Burns with friendly Vietnam villagers.

district police chief admitted that “he must be discreet and does not wander too far from village headquarters, normally returning to his home after his work.”²⁵

B3 The way for the government to gain the confidence & active support of the people is to protect & control the villages every day, 24^h/day. As a part of this program, security must be sufficient to prevent incursions by organized guerrilla units outside of the villages. Thus, the main force guerrilla units must be defeated & the villages secured before significant political, social, & economic reforms can be accomplished at the village level. This prerequisite was recognized, at least belatedly, by the US Army in a major study of pacification in 1966. “The need to sustain security pervades every ramification of [rural reconstruction].” The “key to achieving such security lies in the conduct of effective saturation tactics in & around populated areas, which deny VC encroachment opportunities.”²⁶

B4 According to Rostow, government forces ordinarily need a ratio of from 10 to 20 to one in their favor to conduct successful counter-insurgency operations. In 1959, Colonel George M. Jones, Commander of the Special Warfare School at Fort Bragg, wrote that “one guerrilla has effectively tied down or dissipated the usefulness of 10 conventional soldiers.”²⁷ One need not accept any particular ratio to conclude that to find, engage, and defeat main force guerrilla units while at the same time securing the villages; the government will require an overwhelming advantage in manpower.

²⁵ Joseph J. Zasloff *A Study of Administration in Binh Minh District VIII* (unpublished 1961) p.16.

²⁶ Pentagon Papers *supra* at 2:578. The implementation of the pacification study was rejected by General Westmoreland in 1966; but, subsequently adopted by General Abrams in 1969. Philip B. Davidson *Vietnam at War: 1966-1975* (London 1989) pp.410-411&613-614.

²⁷ US Army Special Warfare School *Readings in Guerrilla Warfare* (Fort Bragg 1960) p.155.

C Malaya

C1 In the 1960s, the Malayan Emergency, 1948-1960, was considered by many observers to be a prime example of how to defeat an insurgency. By one estimate, the number of guerillas fluctuated with 5500 as the average in the 1950s.²⁸ Another estimate put the insurgent strength at 6000 in 1954 opposed by a total government strength of 300,000.²⁹ Chin Peng recalled that “several hundred thousand troops” were arrayed against his guerrillas whose numbers peaked at 5000 and were usually about 3000.³⁰ These ratios led one commentator to conclude “the ratio of Security Forces versus guerrillas was about the same proportion of police versus criminals one would find in any society striving for the same objectives.”³¹ Even with this force ratio, it was to take 6 years from 1954 before the emergency could be declared over.

C2 Vietnam in 1961 presented a far different picture. US intelligence estimated Viet Cong strength, which had been 2000 in 1959, at 17000 before the end of 1961.³² In 1959, it was believed that the North Vietnamese Army [NVA] had about 270,000 soldiers.³³ If the North was able to infiltrate and maintain just 20% of that number in the South, the insurgents would be at 54000 and growing.

It is readily apparent that no reasonable contribution by the US could produce sufficient government forces to pacify South Vietnam.

C3 A look at specific tactics yields the same conclusion. In 1952, in Malaya, the concept of new villages was introduced to combat the insurgency. In essence, villages were fortified and defended to isolate the insurgents from the population. Although not without setbacks, the program proved highly successful and among other accomplishments, created a serious food shortage for the guerrillas remaining in the jungle.³⁴ With a strong preponderance of force and confronting guerrillas who lacked foreign assistance, the government was able to mount a successful starvation campaign.³⁵

C4 A “strategic hamlet” program modeled on the British success in Malaya was started in Vietnam in 1961. It was theorized that the Viet Cong would not be able to counteract the strategic hamlets because to attack them would be contrary to Communist propaganda that the Viet Cong was fighting for the people.³⁶ The Viet Cong did not, of course, feel bound by its own propaganda. The crucial fact ensuring defeat of the strategic hamlet initiative was the number of insurgents. Hamlets can be sufficiently fortified to fend off small bands of guerrillas; however, it is impossible to make hamlets strong enough to withstand attacks by larger guerrilla units. Already in 1960, company and multi-company insurgent attacks were becoming common.³⁷ The only thing the strategic hamlets could achieve was to create “many small Dien Bien Phus, . . .”³⁸

²⁸ Anthony Short *In Pursuit of Mountain Rats* (Singapore, Rept. 2000) pp.349-350. Short’s book was originally published under the less colorful title of *The Communist Insurgency in Malaya*.

²⁹ Gene Z. Hanrahan *The Communist Struggle in Malaya* (Singapore 1971) p.124.

³⁰ Chin Peng *supra* at p.26.

³¹ Lieutenant Commander Ralph L. Muros “Communist Terrorism in Malaya” in *Studies in Guerrilla Warfare* (Annapolis 1963) p.66.

³² “U.S. Perceptions of the Insurgency” at p.25 of 2 *United States-Vietnam Relations* (Washington 1971).

³³ “Failure of the Geneva Settlement” at *ibid* p.22.

³⁴ Short *supra* at pp.399-415; Chin Peng *supra* at pp.268-270, 301.

³⁵ D. M. Condit and Bert H. Cooper, Jr., 3 *Population Projection and Resources Management in Internal Defense Operations* [Draft] (Kensington 1971) pp.7-65.

³⁶ James Farmer *Counter-Insurgency: Viet-Nam 1962-1963* (Santa Monica 1963) pp.6-7.

³⁷ Ronald H. Spector *Advice and Support: the Early Years* (Washington 1983) pp.338-339.

³⁸ Lacouture *supra* at p.157.

D First Hand

D1 The author served on a mobile advisory team or MAT in Kontum Province in 1969-1970. (The MATs are so little remembered they may as well be called the “ghosts” of the Vietnam War: see §E below.) Most of my tour was spent at a location with 6 hamlets (each with its own local popular force platoon) guarded by 3 company-sized regional force outposts reinforced with a Vietnamese Army artillery platoon. Attacking enemy forces (primarily North Vietnamese units at this stage in the conflict) ranged up to battalion sized. No hamlet or village could defend itself against attacks of this magnitude. Moreover, although the total defense force was able to ultimately defeat even the largest attacking units, it could not prevent every hamlet from ever being overrun and held at least for a few hours. In addition, at a time when only 2 of the regional forces outposts were manned and one by a seriously under-strength company, both the latter outpost and an adjoining hamlet were overrun and held for most of a night.

D2 The RFs and “PFs consumed only 2%-4% of the total annual cost of the war” yet inflicted 30% of all VC & NVA combat deaths. Nevertheless, not all was well. Eric Bergerud in his fine (underappreciated) study of the war in a single province, offers an assessment-appraisal of the RF/PF units: “A very small percentage of units accounted for a large percentage of contacts made and casualties inflicted . . .”³⁹ It would be inherently interesting and pragmatically informative to evaluate the correlation between MATs and the relative success or failure of their advisees.

D3 When the new administration took office, it considered its options. In reality, it had only one option — withdrawal. The war was already lost and the most that could be done was to stave off admission of that fact. Ironically, when outgoing President Eisenhower briefed incoming President Kennedy on foreign affairs, Vietnam received no mention. Eisenhower was concerned with the situation in Laos, “if Laos is lost to the free world, in the long run we will lose all of Southeast Asia . . .”⁴⁰ The war in South Vietnam had been lost without the Eisenhower Administration noticing. Perhaps, that is the best commentary on Vietnam’s importance to the United States.

E MATs

E1 The war was both conventional and unconventional. There was an American Army. (Most Americans still believe it was an American war.) There was also a Vietnamese Army (ARVN) which aided the American Army and was aided by American advisors. These advisors reviewed with Vietnamese units but not below the battalion level.

E2 General Bruce Palmer wrote of US Administration in Vietnam.

Advisor: “The great majority were U. S. Army officers. They shared the dangers of infantry combat . . . ARVN advisors, they also shared.” Palmer recognized the role of an Advisor who shared the dangers of infantry combat and lived austere lives with their Vietnamese countrymen. Advising ARVN was a fairly traditional role for army officers. They were working with an easily recognizable helper. Civil Operations & Development Support (CORDS) was an attempt to bring together military and civilian operations. The forces used in this program were broadly described as territorial forces.⁴¹ Soldiers fell into 2 major groupings:

E3 **Regional Forces:** In effect a light infantry controlled by the Province Chief. When properly armed and well led, the RF’s troops were fully a match for the much vaunted and over-rated NVA (North Vietnamese Army).

E4 **Popular Forces:** A village militia. In my time in Vietnam, I only encountered a single PF platoon that was truly up to the job where it was most effective.

E5 The Americans who advised their small units were organized in Mobile Advisor Teams (MATs). Each team consisted of 5 Americans and a Vietnamese interpreter. The advisors were designated infantry advisors but came from all combat branches of the army. Each team also had advisors for the aftermath of battle.

F The Good Done

F1 Vietnam seems synonymous with controversy. As a matter of personal belief, I thought we should withdraw from Vietnam and think many of my colleagues agreed; but we did our duty and concentrated on day to day activities rather than policies.

F2 In our Area of Operations the daughter of a village official had a cleft lip which caused her great distress. The medic on our team (a 24^y-old veteran) made it his personal crusade to get the girl the operation she needed to cure the condition. His efforts were successful and eventually she was taken to a US hospital in Saigon⁴² and the problem was solved. The operation was successful, and the little girl was thus granted an opportunity to live an unhandicapped life.

F3 The Communist idea of persuasion was to go into a village at night⁴³ and butcher village leaders. The main objective of territorial forces was to prevent these terrorist activities. Perhaps our most important mission was to prevent these outrageous acts of terrorism. To the extent we were successful, I consider protection of villages one of the perhaps unqualified “good” things we did.

F4 Although “mobile” was part of the name of the MAT units — mobility was never effective and soon dropped. The theory was that MATs would move from place to place helping to pacify an area. It was never intended that the traveling advisors would help a village or villages mount its defenses after which the team would move on.

F5 In practice pacification cannot be perfected that quickly and the primary advantage — local knowledge — was lost to the MATs. The MATs commonly stayed on location for several months.

⁴¹See Ngo Quang *Territorial Forces* Army Center of Military History (Wash DC).

⁴²Saigon is ancient Kattigara (Columbus’ 1492 goal), now Ho Chi Minh City.

⁴³The real action was at night when the enemy probed our defenses. The Cavalry unit had moved into our perimeter for protection. With that unit goes the Province Chief who rotated units daily to help us protect the perimeter. No one doubted that one of the major engagements was in the offing.

³⁹E.Bergerud “The Dynamics of Dedent (Madison 1977) p.294.

⁴⁰Richard Reeves *President Kennedy: Profile of Power* (Norwalk, Rept. 2000) p.31.

F6 A new RF company was coming into my AO and using a road that I was certain had an ambush waiting. I had a suggestion, but the new commander wouldn't listen even though the Vietnamese officer who had worked with me trusted my tactical finesse. Three men died in the ambush. Would they have survived if my advice been followed? Perhaps.

G Useful Scrounging

G1 In the US army, "scrounging" is slang for theft or unauthorized taking. Advisors were warned not to help Vietnamese scrounge because if they were provided with supplies in the "informal" way, their supply chain would never improve. Good advice but — in late April 1970 we were sure a major attack was coming. Our AO had 3 outposts and about a half dozen hamlets.

G2 We learned that a nearby US base installation was pulling out and did not want to have to move its ammunition. I sent team members to grab all the ammo they could (below §R3). Just days later the expected attack came, and we fought from about 8 in the evening to 3 the next morning. We were successful, but by morning we were so short of ammo that we needed an emergency resupply. *If we had not scrounged we would have been dead before dawn.* Flexibility in dealing even with sensible directives is important.

G3 There were never more than 375 MATs in the field. They could not win the war, but within the context of reality, how successful were they? The primary combat arm advised by the MATs were the regional forces (RFs). — it is important to note that the RFs were the cheapest way of killing enemy soldiers. Not so cheap for the RFs, who lost as many men as they killed. Vietnamese soldiers had a better chance of being killed in combat than their countrymen in the ARVN. The men who lived with and fought beside the territorial force became used to dangerous combat and "austere" living conditions. Despite a very creditable record, the territorials and their advisors could not (below §W1) change the result of the war.

H Retrospect

H1 Why are the "ghosts" forgotten? The MATs were in a foreign country fighting beside foreign soldiers in a war that was lost. Despite the army's high hopes for civil and military innovations — it attracted little interest outside of professional circles. There were few Americans involved, after all. There were no reporters (did they exist? — I never saw a single one!) seeking to "join" the small units.

H2 Barely visible to the public during the war they are hardly remembered. (It is hard to find correct information about them.) Their memory is quietly slipping away, and one can only hope that a dedicated historian will become immersed in [the relevant] records and attempt to write a full history of the MATs and their part in the war.

I Guerillas

I1 In the 1960s, the United States was committed to defending South Vietnam against Communist aggression. What resulted from the decision to support the South Vietnamese government⁴⁴ was not an ordinary conventional war; rather, it featured guerilla warfare.

I2 By the mid-sixties it was clear that the US was not winning the war against the insurgency. Both US and South Vietnamese armies had been deployed, but the "secret" for defeating the insurgency had not been found. US policy makers decided upon a new plan for doing so. The regular (ARVN) forces were intended to deal with the NVA. The new idea was to combine all territorial forces. The US provided a senior advisor to the Provincial Chief. Below him was the District with an advisor.

I3 The Action arm was provided by Mobile Advisory Teams (MATs). MATs consisted of 5 US people with a Vietnamese interpreter. The "mobile" element meant the team would move from location to location and assist in pacification efforts. This system was unworkable and quickly discarded. The system deprived the teams of their greatest asset — local knowledge.

I4 In practice, teams spent a number of months at each location. (I served in 3 locations during my tour of duty.) I do not know how advisors were selected except that only soldiers from combat arms were assigned me as Advisors. I was originally commissioned in the Air Defense Artillery. After a few months in El Paso, I was reassigned as an Infantry Advisor and was sent to Advisor School at Fort Bragg and Vietnam language school at Fort Bliss. Thereafter I was sent to Vietnam.

I5 I joined a MAT in Kontum Province, in the central highlands: geographically the largest province of the 45 Vietnam provinces, though by population the smallest. My subsequent service was the most challenging time of my life. The army had made a good choice for me.

J Ambush #1

J1 The AO [Area of Operations] had been chronically undermanned. Perversely, the Province Chief withdrew a company which put enormous pressure on us and made pacification of the area impossible. The AO was comprised of 2 villages, Vo Dinh and Tri Dao. There were also 3 outposts. They were divided by Highway 14 at the time; higher command recognized its mistake and sent a company to reoccupy the abandoned outpost. When the new company reached the trail to the outpost, I offered advice to the Vietnamese Company Commander: from all the circumstances, I was sure that there would be an ambush on the road and suggested possible preparatory tactics. He smiled politely and went on his way. Even seconding by my usual counterpart made no impression. Minutes after I had returned to my outpost, we heard firing and detonations. When we got to the ambush site, we found 3 casualties: 2 dead and one fatally wounded. When one of the dead was turned over, I saw a grenade that might be ready to detonate. Had the unfortunate soldier fallen in such a way as to prevent the grenade from exploding? Or had the grenade been defective? After a few seconds had passed, I suggested the grenade be safely disposed of. Interestingly, the NVA often used Chicom (Chinese Communist) weapons which performed erratically.

J2 One grenade might not detonate; a 2nd might blow off your boot laces; and then the 3rd might atomize you. This was the only time I encountered a defective US-made grenade.

⁴⁴Vietnam was a country consisting of 45 provinces, each with a provincial chief who controlled all the territorial forces. The main forces would consist of Regional Forces (RFs), village forces (popular platoons). When several RFs were acting together, they would be a group roughly equivalent to an army battalion. Several RFs fairly lightly armed and at full strength would constitute RF-main companies. In combat companies of more than 100 men were considered "large". Well led and reasonably well armed, they were fully a match for NVA regulars.

K Ambush #2

K1 We sent out nightly ambushes of our own. These were usually 5-man affairs. They provided some protection to nearby hamlets and gave notice of any enemy forces approaching our position. Occasionally large ambushes were set up, usually to act on some piece of intelligence.

K2 I was on one 35-man ambush to take advantage of “intelligence” from higher command. The enemy never appeared. Intelligence was usually of little value in Vietnam. The exceptions were radio intercepts. These intercepts would give only a location, but simply knowing the enemy was there was most useful. When intercepts increased, an attack was on the way.

K3 One night one of our ambushes attacked a larger NVA unit. The ambush called for reinforcements. In minutes, I was with a relief column. My idea was to race ahead at the retreating enemy and catch them before they escaped into the jungle. Then, our right flank simply exploded. A sergeant with me offered his appraisal of the situation. His opinion was: “This is where we got blown away.” Unknowingly, the relief column had broken in two, and the other half was moving more slowly and had mistaken us for the enemy. We quickly realized what had happened. The night filled with red tracers. The enemy used green tracers. By the time we got everything sorted out, the enemy was gone. We had been very lucky. Napoleon was right; “Luck is a major component in success in combat.”

L Ambush #3

L1 Highway 14 was patrolled by a troop of armored cavalry. They “opened” the highway in the morning and at night. They came into our perimeter for mutual protection. By this time also our artillery platoon’s 105 howitzers were within our perimeter. The artillery unit was excellent and very cooperative. The cavalry unit was less so and refused to exchange radio frequencies with other units.

L2 The sad factor in Vietnam was that every unit had enemy spies within. Thus, the enemy would necessarily know about our lack-of-cooperation problem. The inevitable ambush occurred one morning when the road was being opened. The cavalry could not communicate with the other units to get support. It was a beaten unit with WIAs [Wounded In Action] and kills that retreated to our outpost.

L3 That night our position was probed by the enemy and the cavalrymen did not return fire; fortunately we were less shy. It may seem counterintuitive that the beaten unit did not try to defend itself, but that is a hallmark of a thoroughly beaten and broken unit. It was promptly removed from the AO. For the next several weeks, units were shuttled & rotated through our outpost at night. In addition, because I was the only officer and gradually becoming exhausted other Lieutenants were shifted in to assist me. They would be sure to get combat experience with us.

M Incident #1

M1 The army policy was not to have any artillery fired within 1000 meters of a hamlet; but 1000 meters is a long way in the jungle. When we had moved to our AO we learned that the enemy tried to use this US army policy to its own advantage.

M2 One day around sunset we started receiving heavy weapons firing. The fire was coming from a position within 1000 meters of a hamlet. I conferred with the artillery commander and on my advice we opened fire. I reported that we opened fire and asked for permission to continue. Our position was very dangerous because the enemy was firing at us from a position within 1000 meters. Ultimately, the request was denied, but not before we had smothered the enemy with artillery fire. My judgement was never questioned. I



Figure 4: Lt. Burns enjoys demonstrating weapon at the ready. DIO was equally ready to facetiously caption the photo: “*Don’t even THINK about it, Commie Rat!*” (adopting Short’s terminology: fn 28) — but instead deferred to Burns’ inclination (§P) towards international diplomacy, amity, & peace.

would far better have been criticized for firing within 1000 meters than have had to explain that someone got killed because I refused to return fire in self-defense.

M3 My guess was that my superiors were content to have someone stop what the enemy was doing but would prefer that someone else (me, in this case) take responsibility.

N Incident #3

The enemy was most active at night. Therefore, it was no surprise when one night we started receiving mortar fire. What was surprising was the accuracy of the fire which was dangerously close to our guns. I immediately advised my counterpart to machine-gun the portion of our perimeter from which the fire was coming. My estimate of the situation was that an enemy observer had been infiltrated into our wire and was the reason for the accuracy of the fire. My advice was followed and proved correct. Advice that helps your counterpart win combat engagements boosts your standing. Providing valid advice is the best way to improve understanding.

O Incident #4

Our MATs shared the command bunker with the Vietnamese officers, one of whom was of ill temperament and addicted to alcohol. Only a wooden wall separated us from these officers. One night a round came through that wall nearly hitting our medic. I went to the other side of the bunker and confronted the drunken Vietnamese officer. He was waving his gun in the air and the Vietnamese were not inclined to approach him. After I persuaded him to put down his gun and come out, the Vietnamese decided he had to be transferred to another unit. The next morning the Vietnamese commander contacted headquarters and requested the immediate removal of the offending officer. Meanwhile, I found myself protectively accompanied everywhere by a gun-toting Vietnamese, Lt. Quant.⁴⁵ a fine officer, who sadly came to a tragic end.

P Incident #5

Petty theft is a problem for all armies as well as civilian life. We had noticed food going missing. (Not that you would want to eat VSO food: dried shrimp, for instance.) We had a radio watch. We each took a turn every night so that every hour each MAT called in to show it was still alive and functioning. One night when I went on duty, I spotted a soldier in our supplies. Finesse was required because I did not know if he was armed. (I was not.) I was able to apprehend him. (He did not resist.) An embarrassed Vietnamese officer apologized. (This did not mean that he did not know what was going on.) Their team leader thought I should have assaulted the man. (But I did not believe intramural fights were the road to victory.) The man had taken a can of dried shrimp. When I became team leader, my policy was to give the Vietnamese anything I did not need. There were then no more thefts.

Q Battle #1

Q1 One of our outposts was about one kilometer away from the command post. The post was doubly weakened (e.g., too small a garrison), and we were ordered to make it defensible, to reinforce it in case of attack. It should be remembered that the Vietnamese army did not like risking its crew-served weapons. The Vietnamese thought that a 60-calibre

⁴⁵The Vietnamese commander feared that the troublesome officer might attack me before he departed. After I had rotated back to the States, my former interpreter wrote that Lt. Quant had lost both legs to a land mine.

machine gun would be sufficient to do the job. I noted that there was dead space to advance close to the area and take out the machine gun. Dead space is an area that cannot be covered by direct fire, e.g., a gully. Nevertheless, it was only a few days before the NVA proved me correct. When we arrived the next morning we were faced with an additional RF company that had been sent to help us.

Q2 We needed to go from the highway down a trail under the overrun outpost. The new company commander refused to leave the highway. Time was important because it was one of the rare times that we got the support of the helicopter-gunships. The District senior advisor was furious when he arrived, but he had no more luck than I in getting the cowardly company commander to move. I claimed I saw movement in front of our position. I took a squad to investigate and then marched them to the overrun post.

Q3 The overrun post was a scene of devastation. But the worst thing was 3 dead ARVN soldiers whose necks and wrists bore the imprint of the wire that had bound them, and each had been killed with a throat shot. This was the only clearcut atrocity I witnessed during my time in Vietnam.

R Battle #2

R1 After the enemy overran Vo Dinh, they attempted to overrun a nearby outpost. As the enemy fortunes faded, they apparently decided to repeat their earlier success. The outpost still under strength, battle defenses had been rethought. Now a mortar which could fire into the dead zone would be the key to the “new defense”.

R2 Constant probes of our outpost and the continued small unit activity presaged a more serious engagement.⁴⁶

Advisors were told not to scrounge ammo and other things for the Vietnamese, in order to allow them to establish their own supply chain.

R3 Anticipating a battle we took advantage of (scrounged) ammo left by a departing US unit (above §G2).

R4 The expected attack came but with a far different result. The enemy dead littered the wire and surrounding area. No doubt we enjoyed a dose of Napoleonic “luck” (§K3). Although our outpost was small and we counted 110 impacts, we suffered no casualties.⁴⁷

S Battle #3

S1 The battle for control of the AO devolved into a series of small actions, reacting to villages’ calls for help. All of this presaged a larger action in the future.

⁴⁶Since we had come to this location we had been troubled by a .75 calibre recoilless rifle. One night 10 rounds were fired at us but none exploded. We had just traversed the very jungle where the weapon was placed. Unfortunately, the only info of value the population gave us was that there were several gun emplacements but only one had overhead cover. There are 3 types of artillery fuses: contact, delayed, & V.T. which causes the round to explode overhead. I told the artillery commander not to fire the V.T. rounds until we knew which emplacement was being used. We thought the enemy would move out if thus warned. When I detected visible enemy movement, we fired all V.T.s, damaging the gun so badly that it would be weeks before we would be fired at again.

⁴⁷After the ambush & the Cavalry unit’s defeat, conditions were tense. Highway 14 bisects our AO and crossed a small bridge. We manned 3 outposts. I shared the command post with the Vietnamese group commander who was brave enough but whose kill-record & tactical leadership were unimpressive. There was a steady stream of small scale action on both sides, setting up ambushes. We also patrolled aggressively and spent time in the villages. The enemy positions were 4.5 kilometers away. Without a forward observer, it would take a lucky round to destroy the recoilless rifle, to race by the enemy on the right intending to jump them as they sought to get back into the jungle. We were lucky to have no casualties.

S2 The anticipated battle began on Saturday evening 1970/4/25. An estimated 400 enemy soldiers commenced the attack and quickly overran the weakly defended village of Vo Dinh. They shifted their attack to a nearby outpost. The engagement devolved into a fierce fight for the 1st bunker line of the outpost. Meanwhile, we supported the defense with artillery fire from our howitzers. The only air support we received was from a single helicopter armed with only a machine gun.

S3 There were many serious casualties sustained simply because of failing to inform us they were coming — if the PRU (Province Recon Unit) had coordinated with us, we would of course have informed them of the hazards: mines & booby traps. (The PRU failed to coordinate with us & therefore blundered into both.) This is an example of how too much secrecy can lead to serious problems.

S4 One action showed how poor the communication between units was. The PRU was a thug squad advised by the CIA. It was hated by everyone. One day, about sunset, we were startled to hear explosions near Vo Dinh. Investigation established that soldiers from the PRU had come into the AO without informing us they were coming. As a result, they blundered into mines & booby traps.

S5 The NVA was not to be outdone. Another night we again heard explosions near the village of Vo Dinh. We contacted the village by radio and were told not to worry; there was no problem. The next day I was busy and did not find time to visit the village until sunset. We discovered that an NVA patrol had made the same mistake as the PRU and stumbled onto Vo Dinh's "popular" booby traps. No NVA patrol was in evidence, fortunate because I was accompanied only by a sergeant & my interpreter. We had just one rifle between us.

S6 The small scale work we were engaged in was important because it gave a measure of protection to the villages; but, it also forced the enemy to up the ante if it wanted to regain its supremacy in the AO. Nevertheless, it was clear that the small actions were leading up to a major confrontation. We prepared for the inevitable. US troops were being gradually withdrawn from Vietnam. As a result, a US unit and a nearby unit was among those excised, so they had extra ammo they did not want to carry away and would be happy to give it to needy units. Team members were sent to grab every bit of ammo they could find & bring in to our post. This would turn out to be a very important decision (§G2).

S7 At about 8 o'clock the AO was swarming with an estimated 400 enemy soldiers. They shifted their attention to an outpost near the village of Vo Dinh. It was weakly held by a popular force platoon, and assisted by a 5-man ambush-guard at the main entrance to the village. The defenders were quickly brushed aside and the village was overrun. I had a hurried conversation with the Vietnamese commander who was brave enough but not a strong leader or able tactician.

S8 We agreed that I would lead the defense, while he supported me from his command bunker. Normally, advisors do not command units they advise; 1st priority is to win the engagement. Everything else follows.

S9 Pressure on the outpost directly under attack continued and there was a brutal struggle for control of the 1st bunker line. Meanwhile, our 2 howitzers were fired in support of our defenses. a single helicopter with a single machine gun was sent to help. There was little one copter could do. Territorial forces were seldom provided with air support. Gunships were needed. I contacted the 2 advisors (both good soldiers) with the armored Cavalry unit, but they claimed they needed a request from the Vietnamese. This was absurd: they were in sight of the problem. Time was short, so I "promoted" my interpreter & he made the request for assistance. Several of us had to hit the dirt when the cavalry decided to test-fire the machine guns.

T Our District Senior Advisors

T1 Our Senior Advisor was a career officer who had been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his tour in Vietnam. He had little good to say about the junior officers he

was sent. I got along with him but was still surprised when he radioed me to "stay inside the perimeter" and take no unnecessary risks. In Vo Dinh a hut was on fire and burning the hamlet. The fires lit up the area and could be seen for miles. We would never establish the precise cause, but some nearby soldiers said it was started by an enemy soldier firing B-40s (anti-tank weapon). We subsequently found a "crispy critter" in the hut's ruins.

T2 Our "air support" decided to leave for refueling, and his departing (and wildly inappropriate) line was: you've "got gooks all over the place." I have often reflected on what would have happened if the Vietnamese had decided at that moment that they were all Vietnamese together against "the Americans" (six US soldiers on the ground). Fortunately, *the Vietnamese remained steadfastly loyal*. The identity and purpose of the enemy soldiers seen by the copter pilot soon became clear. They began to attack Tri Dao. We were outnumbered, but still holding our own positions. The new attack raised new problems. It was our "best" village, and I had promised we would come to its defense if needed. A senior sergeant tried to dissuade me from reinforcing the beleaguered village. I told the artillery commander to have his beehive rounds ready.⁴⁸ This was my slightly melodramatic way of telling him we no longer had enough men to defend the perimeter. I launched my relief column, depending on the known military adage: "Fortune favors the bold." The adage worked: with the arrival of reinforcements, the NVA retreated from Tri Dao, but one of their soldiers was left behind and he was hunted down and killed. Things were looking up and I urged the retaking of the village of Vo Dinh. The Province Chief rejected the advice, saying we might destroy the village in the process of recapturing it. He was right to the extent of the physical structures which were cheaply built and could easily be rebuilt. As to the village inhabitants, they were war wise and had safe places to retreat to while the fight raged. The Province Chief's timidity cost us a chance to enlarge our victory.

U Aftermath

U1 During the battle we were consuming ammunition at a ferocious pace and had to have an emergency resupply in the morning. If we had not seized the opportunity to scrounge (§§G2&S6) the extra unneeded US ammo, there would have been no dawn for us.

U2 As it was, we had the grim duty of policing the battlefield. Another RF company was sent to help us. I accompanied it in a sweep of the area. It was not an aggressive sweep, but, exhausted, I made no complaint. Unless you have experienced combat, it is difficult to imagine how physically and mentally draining it is.

U3 A bevy of senior officers looked over the site of the battle. The most notable was Major General Charles P. Brown. He had a reputation for being a hard-nosed general who was especially tough on field-grade officers (Majors thru Colonels). Sometimes it's good to be a Lieutenant. He surveyed the battlefield and asked questions and then grilled an unfortunate Lieutenant-Col. He made his appraisal, addressing me: "You are doing a pretty good job, Lieutenant, for a duck hunter." I was serving as an infantry officer but still wore the insignia of my basic branch.

V The Last Battle

V1 My tour was coming to an end, and it had been in the parlance of the times a "Hot Tour". I was about to get a reward. The river leading into Kontum city had an RF company (with MATs on one side and houses of prostitution on the other). I was to be given the MAT, but the army seldom gives anything without strings attached. I was given the MAT special assignment. The MAT area was being used as a staging area for troops headed to the houses of prostitution on the other side of the river. Stopping the practice, the present

⁴⁸Beehive rounds are the artillery equivalent of shotgun shells. Parallel to canister in the War Between the States.

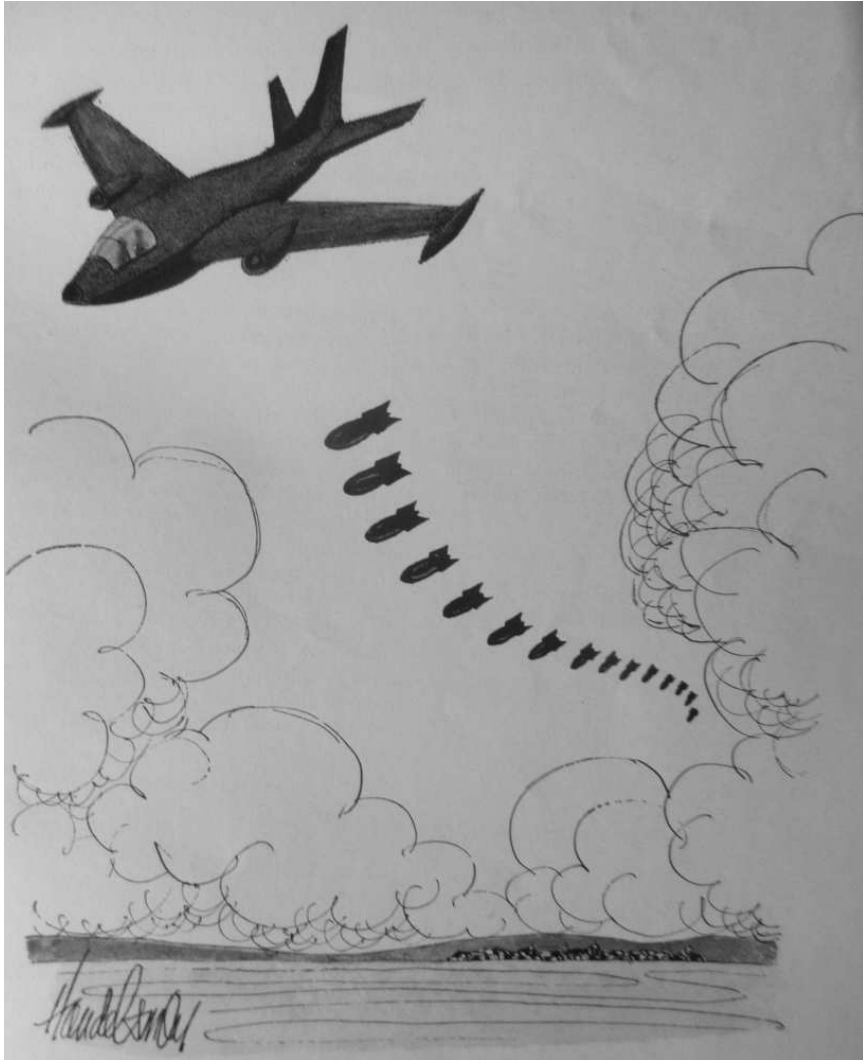


Figure 5: Cartoon presuming errors of *execution* were the cause of US frustration.
Caption: "Oops! Damn! I'm afraid it won't be a friendly village much longer."

team leader according to my superior was bad as the soldiers he was supposed to control. The thinking was that we were supposed to treat the Vietnamese with respect. Our advisors using Vietnam women as prostitutes did not assist in carrying out this lofty goal.

V2 The point may seem trivial but it is yet another example of varying assignments given MATs. (One can imagine their operation in Australia. Tough job!) The MATs were a separate effort on the part of the army to turn the tide in Vietnam. There were never more than 375 teams deployed (2250 men).

W Summing Up

W1 By the late 1960s the US knew it was in a war it was not prepared for.⁴⁹ New thinking and new strategies were needed. The advisory system was created in response. Part of these new and innovative plans were the MATs. Although the war was not won, an earnest effort to turn the war around was made. The situation was reminiscent of what James Longstreet recalled telling Robert E. Lee before Pickett's Charge: "No 15000 men — however arrayed for battle — could take that position." Likewise (above §G3), no 2250 men (MATs) could change the course of the Vietnam War.

W2 Nevertheless, the effort is worthy of study, and it is easy to imagine other circumstances where the techniques could have been used successfully in fighting a guerilla war. Regrettably, the MATs have received little or no acclaim for their efforts. They have become ghosts. An example is Tucker's *Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War*, probably the most comprehensive reference on the subject; but the index does not include MATs. In addition to studying the war for lessons to be learned, the soldiers who did their best in Vietnam deserve recognition — and to be remembered.

DIO

DIO: The International Journal of Scientific History [www.dioi.org] is published by

DIO, Box 19935, Baltimore, MD 21211-0935, USA.
Telephone (answering machine always on): 410-889-1414.

Research & university libraries may request permanent free subscription to *DIO*.
Each issue of *DIO* will be printed on paper which is certified acid-free. The ink isn't.

Editor: Robert M. Bryce, beeabo@gmail.com
Publisher: Dennis Rawlins (DR), address above.

DIO is primarily a journal of scientific history & principle. However, high scholarship and/or original analytical writing (not necessarily scientific or historical), from any quarter or faction, will be gladly received and considered for publication. Each author has final editorial say over his own article. If non-DR refereeing occurs, the usual handsome-journal anonymity will not, unless in reverse. No page charges.

The circumstance that most *DIO* articles are written by scholars of international repute need not discourage other potential authors, since one of *DIO*'s purposes is the discovery & launching of fresh scholarly talent. Except for equity&charity reply-space material, submissions will be evaluated without regard to the writer's status or identity. We welcome papers too original, intelligent, and/or blunt for certain handsome journals. (Dissent & controversy are *per se* obviously no bar to consideration for *DIO* publication; but, please: spare us the creationist-level junk. I.e., non-establishment cranks need not apply.)

Most unattributed text is DR's.

Other journals may reprint excerpts (edited or no) from any issue of *DIO* to date, whether for enlightenment or criticism or both. Indeed, excepting *DIO* vols.3&5, other journals may entirely republish *DIO* articles (preferably after open, nonanonymous refereeing), so long as *DIO*'s name, address, & phone # are printed adjacent to the published material — and to all comments thereon (then *or later*), noting that said commentary may well be first replied to (if reply occurs at all) in *DIO*'s pages, not the quoting journal's.

DIO invites communication of readers' comments, analyses, attacks, and/or advice.

Written contributions are especially encouraged for the columns: Unpublished Letters, Referees Refereed, and regular Correspondence (incl. free errtime for opponents). Contributor-anonymity granted on request. Deftly or daftly crafted reports, on apt candidates for recognition in our occasional satirical *Journal for Hysterical Astronomy*, will of course also be considered for publication.

Free spirits will presumably be pleased (and certain archons will not be surprised) to learn that: at *DIO*, there is not the slightest fixed standard for writing style.

Contributors should send (expendable photocopies of) papers to one of the following *DIO* referees — and then inquire of him by phone in 40 days:

Robert Headland [polar research & exploration], Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER, UK; tel (44) 1223-336540.

E. Myles Standish [positional & dynamical astronomy], Jet Propulsion Laboratory 301-150, Cal Tech, 4800 Oak Grove Drive, Pasadena, CA 91109-8099. Ret. Tel 864-888-1301.

F. Richard Stephenson [ancient eclipses, ΔT secular behavior], Department of Physics, University of Durham, Durham DH1 3LE, UK; tel (44) 191-374-2153.

©2021 *DIO* Inc.

ISSN 1041-5440.

This printing: 2021\9\21.

⁴⁹To be sure, there were important successes. "RF" provided the "cheapest means" (§G3) of killing enemy combatants.

A Fresh Science-History Journal: Cost-Free to Major Libraries

DIO

Tel 410-889-1414

dioi@mail.com

***DIO* — The International Journal of Scientific History.**

Deeply funded. Mail costs fully covered. No page charges. Offprints free.

- Since 1991 inception, has gone without fee to leading scholars & libraries.
- Contributors include world authorities in their respective fields, experts at, e.g., Johns Hopkins University, Cal Tech, Cambridge University, University of London.
- Publisher & journal cited (1996 May 9) in *New York Times* p.1 analysis of his discovery of data exploding Richard Byrd's 1926 North Pole fraud. [*DIO* vol.4.] Full report co-published by University of Cambridge (2000) and *DIO* [vol.10], triggering *History Channel* 2000&2001 recognition of Amundsen's double pole-priority. New photographic proof ending Mt.McKinley fake [*DIO* vol.7]: cited basis of 1998/11/26 *New York Times* p.1 announcement. *Nature* 2000/11/16 cover article pyramid-orientation theory: *DIO*-corrected-recomputed, *Nature* 2001/8/16. Vindicating DR longtime Neptune-affair charges of planet-theft and file-theft: *Scientific American* 2004 December credits *DIO* [vols.2-9]. *DIO*-opposites mentality explored: *NYTimes* Science 2009/9/8 [nytimes.com/tierneylab].
- Journal is published primarily for universities' and scientific institutions' collections; among subscribers by request are libraries at: US Naval Observatory, Cal Tech, Cornell, Johns Hopkins, Oxford & Cambridge, Royal Astronomical Society, British Museum, Royal Observatory (Scotland), the Russian State Library, the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (Trieste), and the universities of Chicago, Toronto, London, Munich, Göttingen, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Tartu, Amsterdam, Liège, Ljubljana, Bologna, Canterbury (NZ).
- New findings on ancient heliocentrists, pre-Hipparchos precession, Mayan eclipse math, Columbus' landfall, Comet Halley apparitions, Peary's fictional Crocker Land.
- Entire *DIO* vol.3 devoted to 1st critical edition of Tycho's legendary 1004-star catalog.
- Investigations of science hoaxes of the -1st, +2nd, 16th, 19th, and 20th centuries.

Paul Forman (History of Physics, Smithsonian Institution): "*DIO* is delightful!"

E. Myles Standish (prime creator of the solar, lunar, & planetary ephemerides for the pre-eminent annual *Astronomical Almanac* of the US Naval Observatory & Royal Greenwich Observatory; recent Chair of American Astronomical Society's Division on Dynamical Astronomy): "a truly intriguing forum, dealing with a variety of subjects, presented often with [its] unique brand of humor, but always with strict adherence to a rigid code of scientific ethics. . . . [and] without pre-conceived biases [an] ambitious and valuable journal."

B. L. van der Waerden (world-renowned University of Zürich mathematician), on *DIO*'s demonstration that Babylonian tablet BM 55555 (100 BC) used Greek data: "*marvellous.*" (Explicitly due to this theory, BM 55555 has gone on permanent British Museum display.)

Rob't Headland (Scott Polar Research Institute, Cambridge University): Byrd's 1926 latitude-exaggeration has long been suspected, but *DIO*'s 1996 find "has clinched it."

Hugh Thurston (MA, PhD mathematics, Cambridge University; author of highly acclaimed *Early Astronomy*, Springer-Verlag 1994): "*DIO* is fascinating. With . . . mathematical competence, . . . judicious historical perspective, [&] inductive ingenuity, . . . [*DIO*] has solved . . . problems in early astronomy that have resisted attack for centuries"

Annals of Science (1996 July), reviewing *DIO* vol.3 (Tycho star catalog): "a thorough work extensive [least-squares] error analysis . . . demonstrates [Tycho star-position] accuracy . . . much better than is generally assumed excellent investigation".

British Society for the History of Mathematics (*Newsletter* 1993 Spring): "fearless [on] the operation of structures of [academic] power & influence . . . much recommended to [readers] bored with . . . the more prominent public journals, or open to the possibility of scholars being motivated by other considerations than the pursuit of objective truth."