Hearts and Minds

Historical Counterinsurgency
Lessons to Guide the War of Ideas in the Global War on Terrorism

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Foreword

It is my great pleasure to present another of the Wright Flyer Papers series. In this series, the Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) recognizes and publishes our best student research projects from the prior academic year. The ACSC research program encourages our students to move beyond the school's core curriculum in their own professional development and in "advancing air and space power." The series title reflects our desire to perpetuate the pioneering spirit embodied in earlier generations of Airmen. Projects selected for publication combine solid research, innovative thought, and lucid presentation in exploring war at the operational level. With this broad perspective, the Wright Flyer Papers engage an eclectic range of doctrinal, technological, organizational, and operational questions. Some of these studies provide new solutions to familiar problems. Others encourage us to leave the familiar behind in pursuing new possibilities. By making these research studies available in the Wright Flyer Papers, ACSC hopes to encourage critical examination of the findings and to stimulate further research in these areas.

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Abstract

To address the potential terrorist threats to America, the National Security Strategy of the United States of America and the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism state that the United States will wage a “war of ideas.” The war of ideas seeks to change the minds of varying ideological populations. A war fought in the minds and among people—human terrain—requires human players to engage and communicate with indigenous populations in the context of the local culture.

As the United States and its coalition partners in the global war on terror (GWOT) clear al-Qaeda from one location, terrorists will seek other locations. They target people to turn them against the United States and the coalition of the willing. A foreign or local government can win the war of ideas and defeat global terrorists only if it wins the hearts and minds of the people, which requires influencing their behavior by offering them a better solution than the solution al-Qaeda offers. A war of ideas is not new to the twenty-first century fight.

While history cannot provide a panacea for global terrorism, today’s military can learn lessons from historical small wars and low intensity conflicts to train and employ forces effectively to wage and win a war of ideas to counter global insurgents and their ability to win popular support. This paper employs a review of two case studies, Malaya (1945–60) and Vietnam (1964–72), to illuminate my thesis.
Preface

For a long time, I have had a strong interest in various cultures of the world. This interest developed from living for three years in Southeast Asia as a child. My interest continued to grow through the various ports of call I experienced in Central and South America, Europe, the Middle East, and during a permanent change of station to Sicily. In many of the courses I have taken at the Air Command and Staff College, in particular National Security Studies, the instructor frequently referenced war of ideas and winning “hearts and minds” in the global war on terror (GWOT). However, I believe the United States (US) military was not fully educated in regards to how it could implement these concepts. As conventional forces increasingly interact with foreign peoples while fighting the GWOT, the US military cannot rely solely on information operations experts and special operations forces to win the war of ideas. Success requires a cultural awareness and appreciation at all levels within the US military. This research journey set out to glean lessons the past offers for winning the hearts and minds of the foreign populaces the US presence will affect.

This research was made possible through the assistance of several individuals. First, I would like to express my appreciation to my research seminar advisor, Maj Julie Verdura, for supporting this topic and assisting me to narrow the focus of a large subject. Second, Majors Lourdes Duvall and Mike Ivanovsky, co-instructors in my research seminar, willingly spent many hours helping me to sort through various thoughts as my topic evolved. Third, Dr. William Dean provided many vectors for the case studies that I explored in this paper. Fourth, Col Robert Potter mentored me through the “craft of research.” I am grateful for the time he made available and the editorial comments he provided me. Fifth, and most important, I want to express my deepest love and appreciation to my wife and daughter for their unfailing love, support, and understanding as I spent many long weekends in the library working on this research paper. Furthermore, my wife selflessly followed me three years ago to our overseas assignment in Italy, where we appreciated and immersed ourselves in the various cultures the world offered.
Introduction

The tragic events of 11 September 2001 violently awakened Americans to the realities transnational terrorist threats pose to the United States. Overnight, al-Qaeda was thrust into the American lexicon and imprinted on the national psyche. Such global terrorists as al-Qaeda seek popular support to increase the number of recruits, safe havens, and line of communications (LOC). They exploit the grievances of those with similar ideologies to push their own political objectives. According to Pres. George W. Bush, "In addition to finding sanctuary within the boundaries of a state sponsor, terrorists often seek out states where they can operate with impunity because the central government is unable to stop them." In many of these weak and failing states, global terrorists also seek to exploit the government’s lack of legitimacy in the eyes of their population.

To address the potential terrorist threats to America, the National Security Strategy (NSS) of the United States of America and the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism state that the US military will wage a war of ideas. It can reasonably expect that the president of the United States will employ the military instrument of power (IOP) in weak and failing states to enable, persuade, or compel them to refrain from supporting global terrorists when the other IOPs fail. Some of these states will be fueled by global terrorist-ignited insurgencies, as they know they cannot beat the United States conventionally. As the United States and its coalition partners in the GWOT clear al-Qaeda from one location, the terrorists will seek another. They target people to turn them against the United States and the coalition of the willing. The GWOT is not a conventional war; it is being fought as small wars and low intensity conflicts (SW/LIC).

Small wars and low intensity conflicts are not unique to the twenty-first century. Since the beginning of the seventeenth century, the world has witnessed 270 SW/LICs. According to the US Marine Corps’ Small Wars Web site, 75 SW/LICs currently engulf the world. Although support from the local populace will not guarantee success, victory cannot be achieved in insurgencies without it. Nevertheless, the US military tends to focus its training on fighting conventional wars, which leads to a lack of training for conventional forces.
in SW/LICs and to a focus on technological transformation
tice the human mind and cultural intelligence at all levels.
As US Marine Corps general Anthony Zinni stated, “Military
conflict has changed and we have been reluctant to recog-
nize it. Defeating nation-state forces in conventional battle
is not the task for the 21st century. Odd missions to defeat
transnational threats or rebuild nations are the order of the
day, but we haven’t yet adapted.”

While history cannot provide a panacea, today’s military
can learn lessons from historical SW/LICs to train and em-
ploy forces to wage and win a war of ideas to counter global
insurgents and their ability to win popular support. Fur-
thermore, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
platforms, people, and tactics are key enablers, but alone
they will not suffice. The war of ideas seeks to change the
minds of varying ideological populations. A war fought in
the minds and among people—human terrain—requires
human players to engage and communicate with indige-
nous populations in the context of the local culture. The
intelligence community (IC) must also receive timely and
appropriate feedback and knowledge from those engaged
on the front lines. The war of ideas in a counterinsurgency
(COIN) requires effects-based operations conducted on all
fronts—political, social, military, informational, religious,
and cultural—by all levels and departments in the military,
government, and nongovernmental agencies.

A foreign or local government can only win the war of ideas
and defeat global terrorists if it wins the hearts and minds
of the people. Winning the hearts and minds of a populace
requires influencing their behavior by offering them a better
solution than the solution al-Qaeda offers. This strategy will
entail a cultural awareness, provided through cultural intel-
ligence, by all service members. Furthermore, a successful
strategy will require human-to-human interaction using small
flexible forces and a robust human intelligence (HUMINT) net-
work at levels ranging from the privates to their commanders
who daily interact with the foreign populaces.

**Background**

In “The Evolution of a Revolt,” T. E. Lawrence argues that
insurgents “must have a friendly population, not actively
friendly, but sympathetic to the point of not betraying rebel movements to the enemy.” Furthermore, he noted that an insurgency could be successful with only 2 percent active participation from the populace, as long as the remaining populace is sympathetic. Additionally, in On Guerilla Warfare, Mao Tse-tung observes that the only way for guerilla warfare to exist or thrive is for the insurgents to ensure they do not estrange themselves from the sympathies and the support of the people. Moreover, Mao pointedly states that “the moment that [a] war of resistance dissociates itself from the masses of the people is the precise moment it dissociates itself from hope of ultimate victory.”

**Popular Support Is Critical**

Global terrorists also realize the criticality of popular support. Much like nation-state insurgencies, al-Qaeda attempts to draw upon popular support, primarily from Islamic populations. Populations sympathetic to global terrorists provide recruits, resources, and sanctuary. Al-Qaeda also seeks popular political support to gain credibility and legitimacy in hopes of recreating sovereign states to support them as they once achieved in Afghanistan. The best actionable intelligence used to assist in eliminating terrorists, their bases, and their LOCs comes from the indigenous populaces that global terrorists attempt to woo. This lesson is one the United States and its allies have relearned for many years. History can provide insight into winning hearts and minds.

**Historical Case Study Approach**

A study of historical insurgencies provides a framework that can be adapted to today’s issues without having to relearn past lessons for each insurgency the United States will face. As Dr. John Lynn, professor of History at the University of Illinois, stated, “The past does not supply us with rules, but it does alert us to important issues and dynamics. The past can never be a substitute for knowledge of the current challenge, but it can help us understand that challenge.” This paper employs a review of two case studies, Malaya (1945–60) and Vietnam (1964–72), to illuminate my thesis. The focus centers on the relative success and/or failure a particular third party had in influencing indigenous populations to achieve predetermined
objectives regarding popular support for an initiative. The British counterinsurgency in Malaya, also known as “The Emergency,” is a good case study because it involved five different and major cultural entities—entities that needed to coalesce into a cohesive, functional society to be successful. An analysis of the US military involvement in the Vietnam conflict provides a stimulating case study because the conflict encompassed both conventional warfare and insurgent warfare—somewhat akin to what we see in 2007 in Iraq. Although this paper does not intend to draw comparisons between the two, it does provide a dichotomy. Much was written about Vietnam, and the US military experience there precipitated an American distaste for protracted SW/LICs. However, along with what went wrong in the engagement in Vietnam, the United States should be cognizant of some successes, specifically the successes Gen Creighton Abrams had in winning a measure of indigenous popular support for the US forces’ mission in Vietnam.

**Malaya (The Emergency, 1945–60)**

In 1945 Malaya was a culturally diverse British colony region containing five distinct and major cultural groups. Richard Stubbs claims “the population [was] just under five million people of whom 44 percent were Malay, 38.5 percent Chinese, 10.5 percent Indian, 5.5 percent Aborigines, and 1.5 percent ‘other’ (including the returning Europeans [after the Japanese Occupation]).” During the World War II years of 1942–45, the Japanese occupied Malaya. To avoid persecution, a significant number of Malays supported the Japanese during the occupation. The Chinese population was less fortunate and received extremely harsh treatment from the Japanese. This was due, in large part, to the historical enmity between the Chinese and Japanese cultures. To counter the Japanese persecution, the Malayan Communist Party (MCP), through their military arm, the Malayan People’s Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA), carried out insurgent attacks against Japanese forces and the Malays who collaborated with the Japanese. These attacks on Malay collaborators continued well after the departure of the Japanese occupiers. The Japanese occupation of Malaya devastated the country’s economy and its internal security, prompting greater nationalism and political engagement,
and it further contrasted the endemic cultural differences. After the Japanese surrender in 1945, several months passed before the British returned to the colony from which they had hastily exited.

Landing in Singapore on 5 September 1945, the British returned to Malaya with assumptions of a triumphant return. The British believed they would be a welcome sight. The people of Malaya assumed the British would bring back the prosperity formerly known during colonial rule. Yet, these assumptions did not reflect reality. The British did not retake Malaya in battle, which did not help to overturn perceptions generated by their exit. The economic costs of the war greatly affected Britain’s treasury and thus its ability to dedicate monies to its colonies. Furthermore, Britain’s focus remained in Europe, which greatly limited the labor available to dedicate to Malaya. In spite of Britain’s involvement in Malaya for over a century, many of Britain’s military forces and civil officers lacked the long-term adeptness in Malayan culture and languages, especially Chinese, which facilitated a greater divide among the populations. Moreover, the British Military Administration (BMA), the initial government established, was ineffective. The organization was primarily military, with very few civilian advisors. Poor policies and administration further alienated the population. In addition, the police force was neither trained for, nor capable of, restoring law and order. Finally, the BMA’s indifference to the various cultures led it to ignore numerous grievances among the various ethnic groups and subsequently provided the fuel that ignited a sustained insurgency.

The population’s primary concerns were with the extreme poverty that existed and a complete lack of security necessary to conduct normal human affairs. The devaluation of the Japanese currency, low wages for the few jobs available, the high cost of living, and the lack of rice—a staple of the Malayan diet—exacerbated the poverty plaguing the country. Malayans frequently were victims of gangster activity, kidnapping, piracy, and extortion by communist terrorists (CT). They were forced to acquiesce to the CT’s coercive demands for “protection” to maintain some semblance of security; then, they were punished by the government that perceived their acquiescence as a signal that they supported the communists. Therefore, a majority of the population saw the government, which was also plagued with
corruption, as incapable of providing for their basic survival and security. Racial clashes between elements of the Malay population and the indigenous Chinese population continued to escalate, creating further grievances. The Malays were frustrated with the British and the MCP that supported the MPAJA during the Japanese occupation. Furthermore, the MPAJA continued to terrorize the Malay populace. The Chinese wanted punishment for the Malays who supported the Japanese during the occupation. Both the Malay and the indigenous Chinese populations came to view the British as putting their special interests ahead of the country’s interest. These circumstances created opportunities for the MCP to exploit during their insurgency.

Enjoying many advantages, the MCP galvanized popular support. First, the MCP faced no recruiting competition within the Chinese communities. These communities viewed the MCP and the ex-MPAJA—now formed as the Malayan People’s Anti-British Army (MPABA), which were the only organized groups in the country—as the heroes of the occupation. Chinese culture, kinship, and friendship bolstered the membership levels of the MPABA. Second, “the MCP was able to tap the nationalistic, xenophobic, and revolutionary sentiments which had become an integral part of the Malayan Chinese education curriculum.” Furthermore, a lack of jobs and schools created a large pool of unemployed teens. With the support of the population behind them, the MCP escalated the violence. Guided by the doctrine of Mao Tse-tung, the MCP called for independence through a people’s war and an uncompromising struggle without regard to legality. The British high commissioner for Malaya, Sir Edward Gent, declared a state of emergency on 18 June 1948.

Greatly underestimating the causes and type of conflict and its causes, the British initially viewed the “emergency” not as an insurgency but a police action to restore law and order. This ignorance created many problems that led the British Colonial Office to remove Sir Gent and appoint Sir Henry Gurney to the Office of High Commissioner. Sir Gurney’s strategy called for coercion and enforcement to stop or discourage MCP support through searches and punishment. The plan was executed using large-scale sweeps that were reminiscent of the last war, which was a conventional war. The coercion and enforcement plan led to the deten-
tion of many innocent people. In addition, the government was unable to protect the masses who were unable to bear arms. Consequently, they were forced to continue to pay protection fees to the MCP. The ineffective coercion and enforcement plan further fueled the grievances of the population, making actionable intelligence harder to gain.

The IC in Malaya, composed of both military intelligence and the police Special Branch, had other problems of its own. First, there was little unity of effort achieved with each organization separately using different methods of collecting and disseminating information. Second, the IC was plagued with a lack of personnel, and what staff there was possessed narrow views of the conflict. Third, they failed to estimate the MCP's hold and political standing. Fourth, they neglected to include the CT in battle. The IC focused on the criminal activities and ignored the political, social, and economic conditions that fed the national unrest. Fifth, they did not attempt to take into consideration the ideals and feelings of the law-abiding citizens. The problems within the IC further exacerbated the capabilities of the administration.

The BMA had minimal people-to-people contact at the lower levels of government and rural population centers. A major failing was its lack of relationship with the Chinese population and the lack of supervision and support in the schools. The government preferred to use technology to run its propaganda campaign, which allowed rumors among the people to proliferate greatly. The population saw the BMA's campaign as insincere rhetoric. Furthermore, the BMA cut back its funding for crucial civil services, and it did not mitigate police force and the army destruction brought upon the population by the coercion and enforcement plan. "The unreasonableness of the government's demands for support, the distrust of the government which had become ingrained during the post-occupation period, and a sense of the need to help those who had suffered at the hands of the security forces, all combined to unite the Chinese community in defense of those whom they considered most worthy of sympathy than receiving the full weight of the law," notes Richard Stubbs. By 1950 the failings of the BMA and the IC effectively cut them off from intelligence and information gathering, thereby providing them with little influence over the population and causing them to develop a new plan.
Dissatisfied with the weakening position of the initial government in Malaya, the British prime minister appointed Lt Gen Sir Harold Briggs as director of operations to oversee and coordinate both military and police activities. In April 1950, General Briggs spent the month touring “Malaya, soliciting advice from the different communities, business groups, governments departments, and senior members of the armed forces and police.” From the inputs derived during his tour, he developed the Briggs Plan. The overall strategy of the plan was to start in the south and move north to eradicate the MCP infrastructure, build security in populated areas, force the CTs to conduct attacks on the terms and grounds of the police and the army, and expand civil administration. The plan called for (1) state-run governance supported by the federal government; (2) regular meetings between the civil administration, police, and military forces, to include the IC; and (3) the creation of new villages. The purpose of creating new villages was to move people away from areas controlled by the MCP and to provide security and a better way of life than the CTs could provide. General Briggs created the Federal Joint Intelligence Advisory Committee to provide unity of effort through coordinated “collection, analysis, and distribution of intelligence on insurgent locations, activities, and plans from whatever source—civil, police, or military.” Shortly after the implementation of the Briggs Plan, the Korean War began, creating jobs and sources of income for the Malaya government and the population due to the demand for local raw materials of rubber and tin. The economic boom created by the Korean War coupled with the unity of effort achieved through the Briggs Plan helped to reverse the downward spiral of the government but only to a stalemate status. New leadership and plan refinement were needed.

The stage was set in October 1951, when the MCP killed Sir Gurney in an ambush. This action prompted the British secretary of the state for colonies, Sir Oliver Lyttleton, to visit Malaya to assess the situation. After visiting with many key leaders in the government, military, business, as well as the indigenous communities, he developed a six-point plan. First, he called for a revision of the information operations (IO) campaign, basing it on cultural awareness. Second, he set the requirements to reorganize, train, and better equip...
the police force. He recognized that the police who lived in the villages could relate with and knew the villagers the best. Third, Sir Lyttleton called for increased measures of protection for the new villages. Fourth, he placed a greater emphasis on the Home Guard by focusing on training, reorganizing, and recruiting, specifically within the Chinese community. Fifth, he instated mandatory primary education to capitalize on the belief that the school-age children were the best way to influence their parents. Sixth, and most importantly, Sir Lyttleton determined the most effective measure in countering the insurgency in Malaya was to provide unity of command and effort under one person who would provide overall direction of civil and military efforts.

Selected to bring unity of command and effort was Gen Sir Gerald Templer, who assumed the job of high commissioner and director of operations in February 1952. General Templer immediately toured Malaya to lay out his philosophy to those involved in the conflict. He told the politicians, military, and police that the emergency was not just a military problem and all departments must cooperatively engage. He emphasized that peacetime activities must continue to rebuild Malaya. Furthermore, General Templer stated that insurgency must be fought on all fronts to include political, social, economic, and religious aspects. He reminded everyone that Malaya should not be a mirror image of Britain. Much more, all people were to be treated well, and their grievances must be heard and addressed when possible. He emphasized to the local populace and their leaders that Britain had no plans to stay in Malaya; instead, the country should be based on the collective populace’s way of life, and the people had a stake in determining what this way of life would be. From his philosophy, General Templer built an overall two-part strategy. The first part included the threat of swift punishment to those who aided the MCP and placement of strict controls on the communities where the MCP lived. The idea was to convince the population that “strict constraints would remain in effect until their support of the insurgency ceased.”21 The second component of his strategy was to increase government legitimacy by providing a better social, economic, political, and secure environment for the population than the MCP could offer. As General Templer stated, “The answer lies not in pouring more troops into the jungle, but rests
in the hearts and minds of the... people. Winning 'hearts and minds' requires understanding the local culture."\(^{22}\)

In short, General Templer combined and improved upon aspects of the Briggs Plan and Sir Lyttleton’s six-point program to win the hearts and minds of the population. The revitalization of the new villages under General Templer provided not only freedom from fear for the villagers, but also created better access to basic services. Civil administration was more effective by first focusing awareness of governance at the local and district levels and then holding elections at the federal level after stabilizing the lower levels of government.

The renewed emphasis on the Home Guard within the villages provided two primary benefits. First, the ownership of security was placed in the hands of the population, and the training and arms they received from the government enabled the population to trust the government. Second, since the Home Guard provided security, the military was free to provide protection to the police force and conduct COIN operations to destroy the MCP infrastructure. General Briggs, Sir Lyttleton, and then-General Templer set the stage for effective propaganda campaigns by showing personal contact and tangible actions that provided benefits to the Malayan people. Their approach was more effective than campaigns built solely upon technology.

In addition, General Templer stressed to the police force that they were servants of the people. Furthermore, realizing the critical requirement for obtaining actionable intelligence from the people and the closeness of the police with the population, he created the Intelligence Special Branch to include the requisite schools and the position of director of intelligence. The Intelligence Special Branch was responsible for collecting the intelligence, and the director of intelligence, recognized as an equal member on the Director of Operations Committee, would distribute the intelligence. Furthermore, the director of intelligence “was responsible for intelligence, but was not in charge of the intelligence collecting machine. . . . Thus [the] Special Branch often was protected from problems which would have diverted it from its main tasks of collecting and collating intelligence."\(^{23}\) General Templer refocused the IC to include in the order of battle (OOB) the MCP’s strengths, weaknesses, strategies, and the attitudes of the population. Finally, as villages began to turn their support against the CTs and as the MCP infrastructure weakened in areas, the government declared the
villages as white areas. When the administration declared a village a white area, it lifted the restrictions and controls placed on the village and allowed greater freedom of movement and support for the villages.

Between 1952 and 1955, a decided shift occurred as the government of Malaya seized the initiative and the offense. The MCP was losing ground. On 31 August 1957, after successful elections, the newly formed Malayan government raised the flag of the Federation of Malaya. This event symbolized the transfer of sovereignty, and the MCP could no longer claim a national resistance movement. The insurgency continued until 1960, but the MCP had to focus, instead, on gaining ground at the polls. The MCP was unsuccessful in this regard.

**Vietnam (1964–72)**

Much like the emergency in Malaya from 1964 to 1968, the United States did not appreciate the nature of the Vietnam War. It fought the war and used a search-and-destroy strategy, which did not work. This strategy continued to reflect the American way of war by means of attrition and big battalions, using overwhelming force. William Colby, US ambassador to Vietnam and head of Civil Operations and Rural Development and Support, stated, “We hadn’t read about the works of Ho Chi Minh, Vo Nguyen Giap and some of the other leaders as to what kind of war they wanted to fight. They wanted to fight a people’s war and not a Korean War.”

The conventional search-and-destroy strategy allowed the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and Vietcong to choose when they wanted to fight and build an insurgent shadow government infrastructure within the population. Furthermore, the American strategy neglected several critical areas of action and consideration. First, the United States disregarded its advisory roles to improve and empower the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). Many of the advisors focused on shaping the ARVN in the image of the US military. Of the advisors sent into the countryside and placed within the South Vietnamese Government (GVN), many possessed no knowledge of the Vietnamese language, and more importantly, its culture. “Training for intelligence officers serving as advisers . . . was not provided until 1970,” observed Patrick Finnegan and Romana Danysh. Second, the US Army
leadership largely ignored the pacification program and provision of security for the South Vietnamese population. Gen William C. Westmoreland directed his intelligence officers not to collect information on nor report on Vietcong forces in the daily OOB. Furthermore, no efforts were galvanized to attack the Vietcong infrastructure embedded in the South Vietnamese population. These neglected aspects in the war pushed the GVN and its military from a leading role, thus severely affecting their ability to influence the population and project legitimacy. Third, many believed the Vietnam War could be won militarily but failed to recognize the political aspects of the war. Ultimately, the strategy the United States employed led to a disenfranchisement in public support and contributed to an ARVN that was untrained and unprepared for an insurgency coupled with conventional warfare. More importantly, the ARVN was overdependent on the US military. Since the US military’s culture, doctrine, and training were deeply embedded with a conventional war mentality, only a change in leadership could reverse the direction of this strategy.

In May 1967, Gen Creighton Abrams arrived in Vietnam as the deputy and later succeed General Westmoreland. Lewis Sorely writes that “convinced that the key to winning the war lay not in the remote jungles, but rather in the hamlets and villages of South Vietnam, [General Abrams] set about trying to reorient the American effort.” During General Abrams’s year as deputy, he spent much time touring South Vietnam to formulate a new strategy through meetings with the politicians, people, and military forces at all levels. What he saw was an “elaborate and wasteful base camp system, exposed strings of static border camps,” a strong embedded Vietcong infrastructure, and a lack of popular support for the GVN. Vietcong shadow governments had “succeeded in obtaining the approval and cooperation of most villagers in many South Vietnamese hamlets. . . . The Viet Cong political cadres helped win the favor of numerous villagers by offering them land and other material benefits, and by promising to eliminate landlords and government officials, who treated the villagers much worse than the VC normally did. Displays of VC strength and the outstanding leadership and propaganda skills of the cadres helped convince many villagers to follow the Communists.” General Abrams inherited a com-
mand plagued by a chain of command lacking in operational control, unity of command, and unity of effort between the ARVN and its allied forces. Furthermore, he was constrained by “severe geographical and procedural restrictions on conduct of the war.”31 In June 1968, he took command of US forces and immediately set out to change the tactics and focus for the war.

General Abrams impressed upon his commanders and staff that this was a war to be fought on several levels—political, economic, cultural, and religious—and the enemy must be confronted on every one.32 He pushed everyone to focus on the “object beyond the war,” not solely on the current military situation with the NVA. This object focused on the people and their ability for self-defense and governance. An effective strategy would require focusing on winning the hearts and minds of the populace under a legitimate government vice attrition of the enemy.

The strategy took shape under the one-war concept, which gave equal weight to all levels of the war.33 General Abrams called for stronger political-military relations, improvement and development of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces, annihilation of the Vietcong infrastructure, disruption of enemy logistics, and an IO campaign that emphasized the truth. Furthermore, he recognized that the grievances of the population must be heard and addressed. General Abrams fully advocated that the recommendations listed in the Pacification and Long Term Development of Vietnam (PROVN) study were essential to winning the war. The PROVN study found “the underlying objective [must be] ‘the restoration of stability with the minimum of destruction, so that society and lawful government may proceed in an atmosphere of justice and order.’”34

Under General Abrams’s new direction and focus, military operations took the form of a clear-and-hold strategy, conducted by military advisors and widely dispersed small, flexible forces vice big battalions. The military would clear Vietcong-controlled areas and train and equip the village’s Popular Forces (PF) and Regional Forces (RF) to provide self-defense and hold these areas. As part of these operations, the Strategic Hamlet concept was developed to foster “the idea of developing hamlets that would develop their own defense and their own identity as communities, and that this would
not be the imposition of military force on them but turning to the people to support and an effort to defend themselves." This strategy required the Vietcong infrastructure to use self-defense forces and US teams to get to the population. By living with the population, the Vietcong infrastructure found the people appreciated the military more because of common commitments, security, and risks. Furthermore, the military would conduct retaliation operations against the Vietcong when they conducted indiscriminate attacks on the population. Large forces would only be used when critical points of the Vietcong infrastructure were determined from actionable intelligence gained by the smaller units. However, in late 1968, it became evident that the Vietcong were increasing their activities to restore their control of the population through liberation committees.

In response to these liberation committees, William Colby developed the Accelerated Pacification Campaign (APC), which kicked off in November 1968. The Phoenix Program was the primary mechanism to execute the APC. The program was to target Vietcong-controlled areas with preemptive operations to eradicate the Vietcong’s grip on South Vietnam. The APC achieved its goal through several means. First, military and territorial security forces saturated the countryside, targeting enemy bases and logistical hubs. Second, the GVN “showed their flag” and took the initiative by refining self-help, self-defense, and self-government programs in the villages. The program “provided increase[d] support, advisers, and funding to the police, [RF and PF],” who in turn were able to obtain actionable intelligence from the people. Third, Colby directed the IC to consolidate and coordinate its efforts, saying, “A network [of] census-grievance teams was sponsored and set up by the [US], ostensibly to survey the aspirations and grievances of the people in the rural areas. [They collected intelligence as a cover assignment].” This campaign was, Colby made clear, a job for the Vietnamese, but one which American forces could help by screening the pacification areas from enemy assaults and conducting spoiling operations against enemy forces,” remarked Solely. By February 1969, the APC was producing satisfactory results, thus the GVN decided to initiate a follow-on campaign.

The objective of the follow-on campaign was to place 90 percent of the population in secure areas. To accomplish the
objective, the APC doubled the size of the RF and PF and re-settled the refugees. In addition, the GVN focused on establishing a local government in every village. The GVN provided training for the village and hamlet chiefs and instructed them to lead and turn their communities into better ones, consistent with their way of life. Based on the history and culture of Vietnam, this was the most important aspect of securing villager support. Furthermore, the GVN assured the chiefs they would be there to help when needed. By late 1969, the United States and the GVN met and exceeded the goals of both the APC and the follow-on campaign. The guerilla aspect of the Vietnam War was eliminated by 1972.

Lessons Learned from Malaya and Vietnam

In both Malaya and Vietnam, civilian administrators and military forces struggled with the lack of culturally and linguistically trained personnel. After Generals Templer and Abrams took command in their respective areas of responsibility, they ensured, as much as possible, relevant training promulgated down to the lowest levels. However, the high turnover rates within the ranks created cultural knowledge gaps that required the training of new sets of soldiers and leadership after they deployed in-theater. Similar to these case studies, especially in today’s dynamic world, cultural and linguistic training must take place before arriving in-theater. This training needs to be part of pre-deployment preparations and military culture.

The British and American political and military leaders in both studies misjudged the type of conflict in which they were engaging. The British saw the Malayan emergency as a police conflict and only focused on police actions. The United States ignored the insurgency waged in South Vietnam and chose to focus solely on the North Vietnamese conventional forces. Remember that foreign forces often view SW/LICs as limited; however, the indigenous populations and their governments viewed them as total. Both governments initially attempted to control the situation vice understanding the local culture and empowering the local government to control the situation. This neglect decreased the training of indigenous forces and severely undermined the influence and legitimacy of the local governments. Military advisors to foreign countries cannot forget that they must seek counsel from indigenous forces and the populace.
to comprehend fully the culture in which they are operating. Generals Templer and Abrams both realized the importance of convincing the local populations of the value of government services not through words alone, but through tangible actions and a promise of independence. In addition, they realized in the end that when outside forces redeployed, the indigenous government and forces would be the ones required to provide governance, security, and self-defense. Therefore, they must be in the lead and foreign forces must be the advisors. Otherwise, the population will see the foreign forces as occupiers, which could result in diminished support and further escalate the conflict. Finally, as proven in Malaya and Vietnam, governance must grow from the smallest localities up to the federal level, bottom-up vice top-down.

In addition to realizing the political struggle of these conflicts, Generals Templer and Abrams understood the importance of intelligence gained from the population. Both generals involved the local populations and required the same of their intelligence officers. Their primary objective was to engage and sympathize with the local population to determine and address grievances and to immerse themselves in and embrace the indigenous culture. The countryside tours, each that were conducted, resulted in eliminating the narrow-minded views of the military forces, civil administrations, and populations. Finally, by offering the local populations better security, civil services, and solutions for independence than the insurgents could, they were able to obtain sympathetic popular support and actionable intelligence.

**An Assessment for Today**

As evidenced in the two historical studies and the situations and missions the US military is facing in the GWOT, the military cannot ignore the human environment as it has in conventional wars. Success in the GWOT will require offering people a better solution to their grievances than global terrorists will offer. The solutions must be based on the people’s desires and cultures, not through mirror imaging or imposing US values on them.

Credibility is crucial to persuade people and to win their hearts and minds. The side the people perceive to have a better solution will win the war of ideas. Bert Decker, a lead-
ing communications expert, states that “the idea of selling can be used interchangeably with the idea of persuasion and reaching agreement. Once we see communication as a form of selling, it suddenly hits home that we had better get serious about communicating effectively if we want to be successful, to have some influence—or simply to have others hear and understand us.”

Credibility built with the populations of the world will provide more support and actionable intelligence to aid in achieving victory in the GWOT.

The first step critical to developing credible communications with indigenous populations begins with a thorough awareness and appreciation of their culture. In an article listing lessons learned by intelligence officers in Vietnam, Harold Ford argues that “there was no substitute for being immersed in the history, politics, and society of a region, in this case Indochina. The best analytic records were generally registered by those officers who had had considerable such exposure [sic]. . . . The ideal combination of such exposure was to have had experience both in the field and in Washington.”

To be successful in COIN operations, military forces must learn to embrace the local culture. Cultural awareness can be achieved through cultural intelligence and the cultural knowledge training provided to the forces.

The military must conduct cultural training for all pay grades. Pre-deployment training to prepare forces for a specific region in which they will operate is necessary; however, to develop the cultural awareness and appreciation mind-set within the military, pre-deployment training is not enough by itself. Global cultural training should begin as early as possible. Furthermore, cultural training should continue through and be included in follow-on basic courses—the Navy’s Basic Officer Leadership Course, the Air Force’s Air and Space Basic Course and Squadron Officer School—as well as service command and staff colleges and war colleges.

Since communication is vital to connecting with the indigenous populations in areas the US military will deploy, language training is a good place to start. Ideally, one day all US military personnel will at least be bilingual. Due to space limitations, this paper does not attempt to develop a plan to address language training for all US military personnel; however, it does offer several recommendations to begin increasing the linguistic skills in the force. First, all services should follow the
lead of the US Marine Corps’ Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning (CAOCL). The CAOCL Web site offers tools to prepare troops during pre-deployment phases and a good starting place for self-motivated Marines to learn another language. Concurrently, the US military should engage companies that produce language-learning software, including Rosetta Stone, to participate in programs similar to the Home Use Program (HUP) contract with Microsoft. HUP contracts allow employees to purchase software necessary for their jobs at more affordable rates. A HUP program for educational language software will allow self-motivated military personnel to learn another language, even if they are deployed, do not have the time to take college classes due to work commitments, or lack available resources. Second, services should target students in officer training programs for language training before commissioning them or enlisting them. Many engineering degree-granting programs, which are already at the limit set for credits required to graduate, do not require a foreign language. As the military continues to seek personnel with engineering and technical degrees, the services should consider language classes as part of the curriculum. This may require a reevaluation of syllabi. Training commands should remove any course material students can effectively learn on the job to make room for language courses. Otherwise, engineering students will continue to be hampered in their pursuit of a second language. Third, all service war and staff colleges need to include language courses. “A single officer fluent in the local language and aware of cultural nuances can be far more valuable to our military than entire squadrons of F/A-22s (emphasis in original).”

While language training is beneficial, alone it is not enough. The US Army’s Field Manual-Interim 3-07.22 states, “The center of gravity in counterinsurgency operations is the population. Therefore, understanding the local society and gaining its support is critical to success in [COIN operations]. For US forces to operate effectively among a local population and gain and maintain their support, it is important to develop a thorough understanding of the society and its culture, to include its history, tribal/family/social structure, values, religions, customs, and needs.” A goal of the war of ideas is to change the minds of varying ideological populations. A war fought in the
minds and among people—human terrain—requires human players to engage with indigenous populations. A person with some linguistic skills and a solid understanding of another culture will fair better than someone who is fluent in that particular culture’s language but has no appreciation and awareness of the culture itself.

Navy commanders frequently tell their sailors prior to a port visit they are direct representatives of America. This is quite true, for in a foreign land perceptions of the United States are oftentimes based more on how US military personnel conduct themselves than how fluent they are in the local language. Actions by Americans significantly affect host cultures and go a long way in developing host-nation impressions of the United States. The US military needs to train all soldiers, Airmen, sailors, and marines to be culturally aware soldier-diplomats.

Much like the suggestion previously offered for language training, cultural awareness training should begin as early as pre-enlistment programs and continue through all levels of professional military education (PME). The lower levels of PME should offer basic cultural awareness at the global level. While war and staff colleges should focus on regionally specific areas; however, this education should not be limited to short two- to three-hour educational blocks. For example, the Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) currently provides region-specific studies, which the international officer students present as part of their research seminar requirements. The four-month regional area study seminars are open only to international officers. This is a missed opportunity for US military officers. Therefore, ACSC should open these seminars to US students as well. Such a refinement would allow US military students to integrate more fully with the international students and learn their cultures in greater depth than the current curriculum provides. The criticality of cultural appreciation and knowledge cannot be overstated: “The fastest way to damage the credibility of US forces and the legitimacy of our involvement with the local national government is to ignore or violate the social mores or precepts of a particular population.”

In its report on strategic communications, the Defense Science Board recognized that “to be effective, strategic communicators must understand attitudes and cultures
[and] respect the importance of ideas. . . .”48 Without a strong cultural awareness, communication will be ineffective.

Credible communication builds trust. The GWOT has seen an increase in the use of words as a weapon. Each side of a conflict uses words to delegitimize its opponent’s standing with the people who are neutral to win popular support. Technological advances in communication techniques and capabilities, as well as one-way propaganda, will not achieve effective communication without human interaction. Simply put, people will ignore words without the accompanying supporting actions. The British learned this principle early in the Malayan emergency when their propaganda campaign relied on leaflets and “loud-speaker vans which were described by the Chinese as ‘loud but empty voices.”49 Both the British in Malaya and the United States in Vietnam found that their respective propaganda campaigns to win the hearts and minds were ineffective until the indigenous population could put a face with the voices through human interaction. As evidenced in the case studies, both militaries changed their technology-driven IO strategies to ones that included placing small forces within the local populations. As a result, the local populations’ sympathies turned from the insurgents when the forces assigned to help them began to share the risks and goals of the communities.

This paper does not argue against technology, as technology is increasingly an enabler; however, unmanned aircraft systems and satellites, for example, will not be key components to winning the war of ideas by themselves. The effectiveness of such technology would greatly decrease in such environments as dense jungles. Furthermore, a picture may be worth a thousand words, but a picture cannot alert one to the local population’s thinking and feeling. The US military must push past the seeming paradigm of technological transformation and begin to include education in effects-based strategic communication with foreign cultures at all levels—tactical, operational, and strategic.

Communication is not just about putting faces on team members, speaking the local language, or acting on the words spoken. Effective communication requires listening, which also requires an understanding of cultures and norms within a community. The Defense Science Board Task Force also noted that “effective strategic communications will en-
gage in a respectful dialogue of ideas that begins with listening. . . .”50 During the initial phases of the two conflicts reviewed in this paper, one of the missing elements to winning indigenous popular support was a failure to listen to the valid grievances of the local populace. People will not want to lend their sympathies if they feel the parties they are supporting are not sympathetic. A local population’s grievances must be heard, and when possible, their grievances must be addressed. In sum, fighting a war of ideas on human terrain requires human-to-human interaction. Interaction between people coupled with open listening will build trust. Trust will help build credibility. Without effective cultural intelligence and communication—verbal and nonverbal speech, listening, and feedback—intelligence preparation of the battlefield will be ineffective.

Intelligence is vital to winning the war of ideas. The role military intelligence performs in COIN operations is critical. Not just within the military, strategic, and operational levels but also at the tactical level. Joseph Celeski emphasizes that “intelligence preparation of the environment at the operational level and intelligence preparation of the battlefield at the tactical level will shift from the old model developed for force-on-force fights, to one more consistent with law enforcement and detective work . . . link diagramming and ethnic/cultural demographic studies.”51

To provide actionable intelligence in COIN operations, the military IC must determine several aspects regarding local populations. This paper highlights several aspects. To begin with, as previously mentioned, it is imperative to determine popular grievances and the associated underlying causes. Concurrently, intelligence must determine where the sympathies of the local population lie and why. Determining the “why” is crucial to building an effective IO campaign. The “why” may not be limited to a populace’s grievances. It can stem from—but not be limited to—cultural, family, tribal ties, religious, or economic reasons. Furthermore, military forces must understand the structure of the local government and/or society. In particular, who are the most influential people in the local population? In other words, who do the people listen to and follow—a chief, tribal leader, or religious leader? US forces in Iraq today have learned this lesson. Antonio Castaneda argues that “in Ramadi, it’s
the local sheiks who more often get results. And with their blessing, the drive to recruit an effective police force is finally gaining steam.”

In addition, what is the populace’s understanding of self-government? In Vietnam one of the worst things the United States imposed was the American way of democracy. The Vietnamese people could not comprehend this form of governance, as they historically were not accustomed to supporting a person before they knew who would win. A foreign nation-state’s self-governance design cannot be with an American face if the United States is to win the war of ideas. In addition, military intelligence must determine the magnitude of the insurgent’s infrastructure embedded in the local population. Moreover, identifying the insurgent ideologies and propaganda promulgated in the local population will assist in developing IO campaigns to address grievances. Determining the means and places insurgents propagate their ideologies is crucial. As seen in the Malayan emergency and in Taliban rule in Afghanistan, much of the ideological training was promulgated through the primary schools of children. The underlying idea was to train young malleable minds to achieve lifetime lasting effects and to use the children to sway the mind-set and beliefs of their parents. Finally, it is critical to determine which populations provide external support to the insurgents. These populations should be among the first targeted for winning over hearts and minds. Again, the importance of a strong cultural awareness in the military IC to better analyze the points written above cannot be disregarded. As General Abrams urged one analyst “[not to just] rely on the teachings of his alma mater . . . ‘but [be] a better Asian.’” Part of the problems seen in the Malayan and Vietnam campaigns of focusing the military IC on the right issues was a lack of doctrine on insurgent/guerilla warfare.

Sam Sarkesian believes that “there is a need to learn from history, analyze American involvement and the nature of low-intensity conflict, and translate these into strategy and operational doctrines.” Currently, COIN and counterterrorism doctrine are relegated to small subsections within military operations other than war doctrines or other publications, such as peacekeeping, stability operations, and civil-military operations. These topics should be stand-alone doctrine publications. The Army’s new Field Manual-Interim 3-07.22 and the United States Marine Corps’ (USMC) Small Wars Manual,
last published in 1940, are good references for each service to use to formulate its respective doctrines. Furthermore, as the Air Force is increasingly providing intelligence officers and security personnel and the Navy is executing the Individual Augmentation System to support joint staffs engaged in the GWOT, joint doctrine also should be refined. However, doctrine is only a guide, it is not a panacea that will change military culture to espouse cultural intelligence and achieve successful effects-based COIN operations. Education and training must coincide with doctrine.

The US military needs to return SW/LICs courses to its PME curricula. As a whole the US military excels in fighting conventional wars from the start; however, in spite of all the SW/LICs the United States has been involved in, it continues to struggle with fighting insurgencies. In spite of all the literature, documentation, and lessons learned from previous US involvement in COIN operations, the military continues to wait until it is engaged in SW/LICs to train and relearn the lessons of the past. For example, at ACSC only a few hours were scheduled in the current curriculum to cover insurgency, guerilla warfare, terrorism, and irregular warfare. Only a brief mention was given to lessons that could be derived from such material as the USMC Small Wars Manual. However, Airmen today are involved in all levels in COIN operations throughout the world. Sarkesian points out that “without some sense of historical continuity, Americans are likely to relearn the lessons of history each time they are faced with a low-intensity conflict.”

This paper does recognize that total conventional war remains a potential in this uncertain world and could present several dangerous scenarios. Many argue that the military should not stovepipe its focus on the current conflicts being fought today, including insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan. They argue that the United States must focus on possibilities of war with nations that have conventional militaries; however, as a sole primary focus for training, the argument does not stand the test of history and the future in which the US military will engage in the GWOT. Joseph Celeski remarked, “The [GWOT] and the charter to promote liberty and freedom as part of our national policy will predictably mean confrontation with those who are opposed to our national strategy. We should expect to see our
continued involvement in insurgencies, including those of a transnational nature."  

Part of the instruction provided in the PME should focus not just on COIN techniques, tactics, and procedures, but also on the strategies of the adversaries the military faces or may face.

Celeski, a COIN expert, suggests in his paper, “Operationalizing COIN,” that today’s insurgents blend the best of different historical models to form their strategies. None of these strategies involves the theories of Clausewitz, Jomini, or Napoléon. Yet the US military PME, following the American way of war, tends to place its emphasis on these theorists and captains. Returning to ACSC, for example, the curriculum devotes less than two hours to non-Western theory and strategy, and the majority of that time is devoted to Sun-Tzu. To get inside the enemy’s orient, observe, decide, and act loop effectively, one must first know the strategies against which they may confront. PME should include studies on historical insurgents, their strategies, and ideologies—e.g., Mao Tse-tung, Che Guevara, Carlos Marighella, non-Western military strategies, and radical Islam. The US ambassador to Vietnam during the conflict, William Colby, has said, “A turning point which reflected, in my mind, the fact that we hadn’t read about the work or writings of Ho Chi Minh, Vo Nguyen Giap, and some of the other leaders as to what kind of war they wanted to fight. They wanted to fight a people’s war and not a Korean War.”

Conclusion

While there will always be the possibility of another conventional war, the likelihood of fighting insurgency-style conflicts in the GWOT is more prevalent. Such terrorist networks as al-Qaeda and their affiliates know they will fight a conflict of attrition if they wage a conventional war against the United States. The United States and its coalition partners will fight future wars in the information battlespace for popular support. The world contains many cultures unique to their environments. Moreover, America does not have the monopoly on the best culture in the world: American culture works in the United States. American culture may succeed in other countries; however, it must be the choice of the people. As the world has seen in Palestine, impressing upon foreign cultures
to implement American democracy can backfire. To win the war of ideas and the hearts and minds of foreign populaces, the United States must bridge the culture gap. As the US military continues to be on the front lines of the GWOT, it must develop a better appreciation and awareness for other countries’ mores and customs. Neglecting to train culturally aware, expeditionary soldier diplomats who can communicate—to include listening—and embrace other civilizations will greatly undermine the efforts to win the war of ideas.

This paper presents an argument and stimulates discussion of lessons learned from history that can be adapted today. Due to the limitations of this paper, several areas should be explored and further refined. For example, the services should develop a plan to provide better training in COIN techniques, tactics, and procedures, especially interacting with local populations. PME cannot afford to continue to neglect COIN operations or to include such topics as an aside in the curriculum. To refine the schoolhouse training provided, a focus should be placed on cultural intelligence, communication skills, and embracing the local culture once Airmen are in the field. Moreover, SW/LICs should be better addressed and strengthened in service and joint doctrine. Training alone will not be sufficient without the doctrine to back it up.

Additionally, the US military must achieve better communication and rapid dissemination of information feedback from troops in the field to the IC. While special operations forces are highly trained with the aspects presented in this paper, to include providing the IC with useful information, they are a high-demand/low-density asset that cannot be everywhere all the time. Thus, in the GWOT the US military is frequently using large conventional forces in COIN operations. As presented in the lessons learned, several times usable intelligence came from HUMINT gained from local populations and leaders by conventional forces in the field.

This paper does not suggest that the US military must train every soldier, sailor, Airman, or marine involved in COIN operations to be HUMINT experts; however, each one needs to learn how to fill HUMINT gaps. The services must train its military members to realize what types of information gathered from conversations and observations are useful and why it is important to provide that data to the IC.
Each must know how to recognize indicators at the tactical level if COIN campaign objectives are succeeding or failing. There must be a robust feedback loop established between the IC and the boots on the ground: IC must support the war fighter and the war fighter must support the IC. Each service should explore implementation of the “Every Soldier is a Sensor” concept that the US Army is developing.60

The services must closely weigh the value and implementation of language training. Each service should research how to avoid two potential stovepipes. The first stovepipe could emerge if languages are targeted using current conflicts as a guide or only addressing a worst-case scenario to make language-training decisions. A second stovepipe could arise if the military locks personnel into one geographic location and/or career path because of the language skills they possess. Language training is critically relevant in the GWOT. Therefore, well-counseled deliberations must ensue to determine how best to capture the skills that will provide the most-effective military corps.

In sum, the military must champion cultural education and awareness to achieve the end-state of the war of ideas. To achieve a better state of peace and to “preserve the peace,”61 as written in the NSS, the US military must leave some lasting, positive effects with the foreign populations. While winning the hearts and minds of people will not guarantee victory in the GWOT, the United States cannot achieve victory without it. To conduct successful effects-based operations on human terrain in the GWOT, the US military must focus on developing a culturally aware force that can interact with the various cultures of the world the United States wishes to influence.

Notes

(All notes appear in shortened form. For full details, see the appropriate entry in the bibliography.)

3. Small Wars Center of Excellence, “Inactive Small Wars and LICs.”
4. “Small Wars/LIC/MOOTW.”
7. Ibid.
9. Ibid., 72.
15. Ibid., 6.
17. Ibid., 77.
18. Ibid., 100.
19. Ibid.
29. Ibid., 30.
32. Ibid., 18.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid., 20.
35. Colby, Keynote Speech.
38. Ibid., 65.
40. Colby, Keynote Speech.
41. Decker, *You’ve Got to Be Believed*, 16.
42. Ford, “Revisiting Vietnam.”
47. Ibid.
52. Castaneda, “U.S. Counts on Sheiks.”
54. Ibid., 169.
56. Ibid.
58. Ibid., 20–21.
59. Colby, Keynote Speech.
60. Peck, “Army Game Strives.”
**Acronyms**

ACSC  
Air Command and Staff College

APC  
Accelerated Pacification Campaign

ARVN  
Army of the Republic of Vietnam

BMA  
British Military Administration

CAOCL  
Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning

COIN  
counterinsurgency

CT  
communist terrorists

GVN  
South Vietnamese Government

GWOT  
global war on terror

HUMINT  
human intelligence

HUP  
Home Use Program

IC  
intelligence community

IO  
information operations

IOP  
instruments of power

LOC  
lines of communications

MCP  
Malayan Communist Party

MPABA  
Malayan People’s Anti-British Army

MPAJA  
Malayan People’s Anti-Japanese Army

NSS  
National Security Strategy of the United States of America

NVA  
North Vietnamese Army

OOB  
order of battle

PME  
professional military education

PF  
Popular Forces

PROVN  
Pacification and Long Term Development of Vietnam (Study)

RF  
Regional Forces

ROTC  
Reserve Officer Training Corps

SW/LIC  
small wars/low intensity conflict

USMC  
United States Marine Corps
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