

John F. Kennedy & the Ascendancy of U.S. Counterinsurgency Doctrine

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners. I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

The formation of a coherent counterinsurgency policy in the United States is often attributed to the administration of President John F. Kennedy. Indeed, through his own personal fascination and promotion of the subject, Kennedy infused funding and expertise into a steadily expanding counterinsurgency apparatus. However, American counterinsurgency doctrine was implanted deeply within military and intelligence institutions and government bureaucracy long before the Camelot era.

American conquest by counterinsurgency has a long legacy. The Founding Fathers for Kennedy (to whom this tradition belongs) were Andrew Jackson, William Sherman, William McKinley, Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. As this study argues, periods of American expansion have always been based on the principles of anti-civilian warfare. The history of the United States is one of expansion and primitive accumulation – a process facilitated by methods promoted by presidents spanning the last two centuries.

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This project could never have been completed without the ongoing support of my family. To my parents for instilling in me the power of knowledge and words over money and guns. To my partner, Elena: thank you for accepting the fact that I am either reading or writing most of the time. You always ground me when my head is too far gone in the clouds. To my daughters, Carina and Annika: for you I fight for a world of peace and not war. May your generation know a reality free of genocide, pillage, and exploitation. For the many people in life who assured me that war is an unavoidable part of human nature: I say so too is love. And to the dreamers who seek an end to the terrible criminal violence of war: may the future be yours.

I would also like to respectfully acknowledge that I live, work, and raise my family on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron, Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. As a benefactor of colonial war, I have a personal responsibility to engage in the process of altering the relationship between the people and the land of Turtle Island.

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The most basic strategy of any counterintelligence program is to confuse the enemy and have them believing what you want them to believe. But also it has another aspect to it, the aspect that we know as terrorism – intimidation and violence, making examples of leaders, making examples of people who resist. The United States government perfected these techniques in Southeast Asia against the people’s movement in Vietnam. Many of the police professionals who would later lead the war of suppression against FALN and Black Liberation Army went on year-long sabbaticals to Vietnam to be trained in the Phoenix program...the Phoenix program was a program carried out by the CIA, and its objective was to root out the infrastructure and the cadres and troops of the National Liberation Front, the so-called Viet-Cong. They killed over 50,000 people in this effort, many of whom were tortured and most of whom were murdered in their sleep, much like Fred Hampton.

- Black Panther Party & Black Liberation Army member, Dhoruba bin Wahad

*FALN was Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional Puertorriquena. Fred Hampton was leader of the Chicago chapter of the Black Panther Party.

Introduction

The formulation of Kennedy-era counterinsurgency policy (1961-1963) has been the subject of much research, discussion, debate and disagreement. While supporters of the Kennedy administration tend to downplay the role of counterinsurgency in foreign policy planning, those who do acknowledge Camelot's preeminent focus on counterrevolution almost unanimously describe the effort as either ineffectual or an outright disaster. Other popular narratives have been woven out of this mixture of denial on one side, and outright condemnation on the other. Foremost among them, is the mythology that John F. Kennedy was the initiator and main proponent of American counterinsurgency doctrine.

The traditional analysis of the Kennedy counterinsurgency era does not suffice for several reasons. Counterinsurgency, by many accounts, appears to be a constant factor throughout recorded human history. American counterinsurgency doctrine, despite widely accepted misconceptions, did not begin with the Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961, or the various assassination plots against Fidel Castro, or even the secret wars in Laos and clandestine actions against North Vietnam. Long before these interventions were counterinsurgency operations in Greece, Guatemala and Iran. Even further into the past we find American counterinsurgency in the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Panama. Retreat into the 19th century, and we find clear examples of counterinsurgency warfare during the subjugation of the Lakota Sioux, the defeat of the Southern Confederacy, the hundred-year war against the Seminole, and President Andrew Jackson's Indigenous removal policies. In fact, as historian John Grenier argues, Americans practiced counterinsurgency long before they were even considered a nation.

The idea that Kennedy's "foray" into counterinsurgency was a policy disaster is also an unfounded belief, a dogma that tends to operate in the service of the American policymakers who continue to use counterinsurgency tactics to this day. One should ask: if President Kennedy's counterinsurgency ambitions were foolhardy, misguided, and impossible to implement, then why does the American military-intelligence establishment continually promote, advance, fund, and deploy these techniques around the world? While many consider the intervention in Laos a failure, others may see the success of the clandestine war and the funding scheme centered on CIA criminal alliances with Hmong opium traffickers. After all, many of the same CIA agents and government personnel who participated in the Air America operation out of Laos and Thailand were the same individuals who made similar alliances with Colombian drug lords to fund the Contra Wars during the Reagan administration. Were these counterinsurgency operations a failure? Today, it is safe to assume there is no threat of insurgency to be found in Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras or Guatemala. Yet, by all accounts, the American Empire remains.

What will be proposed in the following pages is that the distortion of the Kennedy counterinsurgency legacy is in fact inherent to the propaganda and value systems of our current so-called "post-ideological" world. The illusion of counterinsurgency as an historical aberration, unique somehow to the Camelot era, also fits into wider narratives focusing on the nature and intent of American imperialism. The mystery of JFK's assassination also conforms to this paradigm, in that his murder is perceived as an unfortunate result of the uncontrollable momentum unleashed by Kennedy's own counterinsurgency obsession. The result of adhering to this framework cloaks the ongoing prevalence of counterinsurgency. It also obscures the fact that this type of warfare has been a constant throughout human and American history.

Above all else, the subterfuge which is a doctrinal necessity to all counterinsurgency practices dictates that the narrative hides the true purpose of counterrevolutionary state-terror. What has been largely forgotten or dismissed is the fact that American imperialism is a process of (primitive) capital accumulation - one wherein counterinsurgency is deployed with the explicit intention of terrorizing and controlling targeted civilian populations. It is for this reason we must dispel the traditional narratives, and, in turn, formulate a better explanation of how American counterinsurgency fits into our current reality. What needs to be acknowledged is that continued use of these practices is damaging not only to wider humanity, but also to the health and well-being of the American people.

This thesis has been divided into three main sections, each having a series of sub-chapters. The first part, *Frontiers Old and New*, has a wide-ranging historical focus which ties modern American counterinsurgency doctrine to the warfare of “New World” settler-colonists. The patterns of this method of war are traced to figures such as President Andrew Jackson and General William Tecumseh Sherman. Special attention will be given to early displays of American counterinsurgency warfare against the Red Stick Creeks, the Seminole, the Southern Confederacy, and the Lakota Sioux. Moving forward into the 20th century, the foundations of the American counterinsurgency institution were strengthened through the expansionist zeal of past presidents like William McKinley, Teddy Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson. It will be argued that by the Camelot era, President Kennedy inherited a large, intricate, and international counterinsurgency apparatus. Kennedy’s fascination and devotion to counterinsurgency merely injected funding and interest into an established imperial bureaucracy.

The second section, *America's Praetorian Guard*, charts the rise of organized police in the United States from roots in the Barbadian slave patrols that were brought to South Carolina in the 17th century. From the outset, American policymakers harnessed the police as the most potent weapon of domestic counterinsurgency. This section also describes how U.S. colonial expansion into the Philippines, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Panama were the beginnings of an imperial regime based on rule by militarized proxy political police. This style of counterinsurgency policing would come home in the form of the Palmer Raids, and later, the FBI's COINTELPRO. Taking us into the post-World War II era, the Central Intelligence Agency became the most vital arm of America's international police regime. Under the auspices of Kennedy-era "security-as-economic-development" programs like the Office of Public Safety, police around the world were trained by the CIA. At the same time, the Agency invested in strategies of social control and social engineering through Project Camelot, the Human Ecology Fund, and MK-ULTRA. Attention is also given to the ultimate expression of these policies: the CIA's Operation Phoenix in Southeast Asia and Operation Condor in Latin America.

The third section consists of five case studies of some lesser-known examples of Kennedy-era counterinsurgency policy. The traditional narratives, which focus on Cuba, Vietnam, and Laos, will be replaced with analysis of Guatemala, Peru, Brazil, Guyana, and Thailand. American practice in these instances displayed how powerful and intricate counterinsurgency bureaucracies became embedded within various U.S. client states. Far from a policy of failure, Kennedy's counterinsurgency initiatives installed a vast regime of states who were loyal to American interests – some for a very long time after the death of JFK. Rather than endorsing the success of these operations, the point here is to illustrate the misconception that both Kennedy and U.S.

counterinsurgency failed in their respective missions. For propaganda purposes, what has been withheld to a wider audience is that quite the opposite of this is true.

Undoubtedly, military historians and counterinsurgency theorists will be outraged and annoyed with the interchangeable use of terminology to be found in the coming pages. Insurgents are people who, organized or not, resist the organized violence of primitive accumulation. Over the centuries so-called insurgents have been stigmatized variously as barbarians, pirates, bandits, outlaws, revolutionaries, partisans, subversives, witches, radicals, terrorists and *homo sacer*. Superficial alterations in official terminology are meaningless, and constant re-categorization of the same phenomena is useful only to the counterinsurgent. After all, these terms are dictated by the counterinsurgent himself as obfuscation to the reality of a type of warfare which, historically and explicitly, targets civilians and non-combatant populations. Employing doublespeak, the counter-revolutionary, counter-terrorist, counter-subversive, or practitioner of “low-intensity conflict” mires reality by clouding their own role in vast crimes against humanity.

Part I

Frontiers Old and New: Counterinsurgency as an American Method of War

Chapter I

The Roman Empire and *Homo Sacer*

In two lectures given in 1962, German political and legal theorist Carl Schmitt first proposed his now famous origin of the partisan-guerrilla, and relatedly, his rendition on the inception of insurgent and counterinsurgent warfare. “The initial situation for our consideration of the problem of the partisan is the guerrilla war that the Spanish people waged against the army of a foreign conqueror from 1808 until 1813” observed Schmitt, speaking of Napoleon’s invasion. “In this war, a people – a pre-bourgeois, pre-industrial, pre-conventional nation” he contends, “for the first time confronted a modern, well-organized, regular army.” In the aftermath of this development, “new horizons of war opened, new concepts of war developed, and a new theory of war and politics emerged.”¹

In hindsight, it would be an understatement to declare Schmitt, though well respected, less than visionary in this instance. Guerrilla warfare, arguably, can be traced back to the earliest recorded history of the great ancient empires; where people stigmatized as barbarians staged countless insurgencies against the modern, regular armies of the day. Schmitt emphasized “that there actually are no old theories of the partisan as distinguished from modern ones. In the classical laws of war or European international law, there was no place for the partisan in the

¹ Carl Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan: Intermediate Commentary on the Concept of the Political* (New York: Telos Press, 2007), 3.

modern sense...he was simply outside the law.”² However, as Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben has illustrated more recently, the Roman Empire had constructed laws with a specific legal designation – *homo sacer* – pertaining to those banned from society, including barbarians, pirates, bandits, and others who would have been considered the equivalent of the modern-day insurgent or guerrilla. Agamben believes this law had widespread ramifications:

The sovereign and *homo sacer* are joined in the figure of an action that, excepting itself from both human and divine law...nevertheless delimits what is, in a certain sense, the first properly political space of the West distinct from both the religious and the profane sphere, from both the natural order and the regular juridical order.³

Roman law placed *homo sacer* within its domain and jurisdiction, yet as non-citizens, they did not possess any rights under those same laws. Therefore, the law could be used to punish the insurgent, but it did not afford the insurgent any protections. Agamben sees this as the origin of sovereign power, and an early attempt at the institution of organized social control, manifested most explicitly in the sovereign’s rule over life and death. With the legal designation “*homo sacer*,” the Romans created a system where, according to Agamben, “life is sacred only insofar as it is taken into the sovereign exception,” and wherein this law creates a society in which “human life is included in the political order in being exposed to an unconditional capacity to be killed...their [*homo sacer*] cancellation or negation is the constitutive act.” Agamben deduces that this is “the originary political formulation of the imposition of the sovereign bond.”⁴

Certainly, there is no arguing the fact that non-conventional forces and irregular warfare had a place in resisting the protracted, centuries-long Roman invasions of northwestern Europe,

² Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan*, 10.

³ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 84.

⁴ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 85.

Britain, the Balkans and North Africa. Based on years of extensive research, professor Graham Webster cites Augustus (27 B.C. – A.D. 14), as the Emperor who “first clearly understood...the idea of an area under Roman dominion and control.” As the imperial frontier expanded, Roman military forces were preoccupied primarily with the dynamics of, as Webster describes it, “containing a conquered people.” The desire to control barbarians resulted in the development of new “methods employed in Republican times to deal with an external hostile power” of which, “invasion and conquest seemed the most obvious.”⁵

Following the logic of Roman sovereign law and custom, Augustus refused to record the names of the barbarians with whom he battled. As historian David Braund recounts “the war with Sextus [a pirate] is called a war (*bellum*), but it is a war with slaves, dignified only by its scale: Sextus himself goes unnamed.” Braund further explains that:

Bandits and pirates are distinct from those who are in a formal state of declared warfare with the Roman people. Bandits and pirates are not considered proper enemies of Rome: rather, they are common enemies of mankind. They are, at once, the enemies of no one and the enemies of everyone.⁶

This passage echoes Agamben and his assessment of the place of *homo sacer* in Roman law. Braund further exposes the existential subversive threat of piracy, which “did not conform to accepted rules: it was inimical to civilization in all its aspects...at its worst, piracy might be so threatening as even to offer an alternative to civilization.” For the Republic of Rome, “pirates constituted a danger that was not only physical, but also moral and social. Particularly so, since

⁵ Graham Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army of the First and Second Centuries A.D.* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 28-9.

⁶ David Braund, “Piracy Under the Principate and the Ideology of Imperial Eradication” in, *War and Society in the Roman World* (New York: Routledge, 1993), John Rich & Graham Shipley eds., 195-6.

the elite defined the rules of civilization and these certainly did not include the exercise of power by the lower orders, as pirates or in any other guise.”⁷

Under the rule of Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 161-80) “from the Nile delta to Britain, from Armenia to Dacia, there were revolts and incursions.” The solution, for Aurelius, was to penetrate “deep into barbarian lands” where “his purpose became clear – he was determined to bring to submission all peoples bordering the Danube, and under direct control rather than rely on treaties. All tribes were reduced one by one.” With his war of attrition almost complete, the “groups of conquered barbarians were settled in frontier districts,” as the final stage of Roman counterinsurgency unfolded. The main aim of Aurelius “was to bring the barbarians immediately beyond the frontier under Roman control” while “the army he had assembled in Italy to clear the tribes out” had performed effectively, and, “the success of this demonstrated the need for a permanent mobile force.”⁸ This reference is an evocative illustration of an ancient prototype, a predecessor to the scorched-Earth tactics of American Rangers and Frontiersman, and the forced relocations of Indigenous peoples to reservation lands in the 19th century; or by comparison, in the 20th century, to the Strategic Hamlets and Special Forces counter-guerrilla operatives employed by the United States during counterinsurgency warfare in Southeast Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

The type of irregular warfare frequently described by contemporary military theorists as “counterinsurgency,” is as old as recorded human history. It was undoubtedly an aspect of the architecture of imperial Rome, and, more probably, belonged to civilizations much older. While the findings of Agamben and others negate Schmitt’s partisan theory, a lack of insight on behalf of Schmitt is excusable. There is certainly more to the history of counterinsurgency than either

⁷ Braund, “Piracy Under the Principate,” 197-8.

⁸ Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army*, 84-5.

Schmitt or Agamben cover in their heavily Eurocentric interpretations. Confounding the issue further, Schmitt mentions in *Theory of the Partisan*, but ignores as relevant, an important theater of insurgent and counterinsurgent activity preceding and contemporary to Napoleon: the continuous, and by that time centuries-old, Indigenous resistance to European colonization in the Americas.

Chapter II

Counterinsurgency Warfare and the Colonization of America

Counterinsurgency was an integral component in the expansion of settler-colonist society in the United States. In fact, European colonization of America could not have occurred if not for settler society's constant and unrelenting counterinsurgency warfare. "For the first 200 years of our military heritage" comments retired U.S. Air Force officer and professor of history John Grenier, "Americans depended on the arts of war that contemporary professional soldiers supposedly abhorred: razing and destroying enemy villages and fields; killing enemy women and children; raiding settlements for captives; intimidating and brutalizing enemy noncombatants; and assassinating enemy leaders."⁹ Established long before the War of Independence, these practices, based on the principles of counterinsurgency, are a firmly rooted aspect of American military doctrine. Grenier's central argument is that early Americans "used the tactics and techniques of *petite guerre* in shockingly violent campaigns to achieve their goals of conquest" creating, in turn, "a military tradition that accepted, legitimized, and encouraged attacks upon and the destruction of noncombatants, villages, and agricultural resources."¹⁰

The wealth of evidence in support of Grenier's theories is overwhelming. One of the most famous advocates of Indigenous extermination through a variety of counterinsurgency methods, President Andrew Jackson, came to dominate the course of politics in the United States in the

⁹ John Grenier, *The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier, 1607-1814* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 5.

¹⁰ Grenier, *The First Way of War*, 10. Grenier also: "traces the colonists' embrace of three practices – extirpative war making, the creation of specialized units for Indian fighting (rangers), and the use of scalp hunters to motivate privatized, commercialized campaigns through the issuance of scalp bounties.", 13. Special thanks to historian Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz for making the author aware of Grenier's important and ground-breaking work. See also: Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2014).

period immediately following Grenier's study (which is from 1607-1814). Widely regarded, alongside Thomas Jefferson, as the father of the Democratic Party, Jackson was the architect of the 1830 Indian Removal Act. In her book on what would become known as "The Trail of Tears," Gloria Jahoda said that when "Andrew Jackson ran for the presidency he made Indian Removal, which he called frankly by its correct name, a campaign issue. It was no longer arguable." The reasoning behind the policy was spurred by the false and unfounded view that "Indians only 'infested' the land; they were hunters and did not farm it."¹¹ For Jackson and many other presidents, including his disciple, Martin Van Buren, the presence of Indigenous people on coveted lands was perceived as an impediment to progress. Historian Michael Rogin argues that for Indigenous people, in the minds of men like Jackson "the market alone could not control them, for they could ignore, as self-improving whites could not, its imperatives. They would not, to improve their position, sell their land and move west."¹² The removal or eradication of Indigenous tribes was justified as the only logical choice to advance civilization on the pathway to American modernity.

Jackson's policy of forced Indigenous relocation was enacted during times of heightened violence, hatred and suspicion. Prior to gaining the office of the presidency, Jackson had but recently led a series of particularly vicious American wars against the Creek (Muskogee) and Seminole tribes. In his war against the Creeks, as various factions of the tribe were coerced and coopted into submission and collusion, the particularly militant Red Sticks held out through a highly successful guerrilla-based strategy. In retaliation, Jackson unleashed the savage tactics of counterinsurgency and a war of extermination. On March 27, 1814, he trapped the Red Sticks at

¹¹ Gloria Jahoda, *The Trail of Tears* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1975), 39.

¹² Michael Paul Rogin, *Fathers and Children: Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975), 207.

Horseshoe Bend, where the Creek settlement, Tohopeka, sat on an enclosed loop on the Tallapoosa River. A policy of scorched-Earth soon prevailed. Author Robert Remini wrote of the incident, where he describes “the mass arrival of troops” outside the Creek village:

The end of the Red Sticks was at hand. The infantry rushed forward while the friendly Indians and spies advanced from the rear. The Red Sticks found themselves caught in a crushing pincer. They could not escape. They ducked into the thick brush that covered the ground to seek shelter, but they were flushed out and shot at close range. The killing became savage.¹³

In addition to killing all Red Stick warriors, Remini describes American soldiers partaking in the indiscriminate murder of children and the elderly. “Once the troops gained the upper hand they set the village on fire...the remaining warriors in the compound were systematically slaughtered.” Apparently not satisfied with their victory in battle “the next morning the killing was resumed,” for Jackson’s troops “the barbarity did not abate with the end of the fighting. Tennessee soldiers were observed cutting long strips of skin from the bodies of dead Indians to make bridle reins of them.” When Jackson ordered a body count, 850 Red Sticks lay dead, an estimated 300 more bodies were taken by the river. By comparison, only 26 American soldiers lost their lives.¹⁴

Soldiers themselves were not spared Jackson’s fury if they chose to oppose his genocidal plans. Often, recalcitrant white Americans were just as much the subject of Jackson’s violent imposition of order and domination as the people of the Indigenous tribes. In a letter written on March 14, at the height of the campaign against the Red Sticks, Jackson wrote:

A part of my troops are crossing the river to day on their march. They have been detained a little this morning – mutiny having again shewn itself in my camp. A private (John Wood) having been

¹³ Robert V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson & His Indian Wars* (Toronto: Viking, 2001), 77-8.

¹⁴ Remini, *Andrew Jackson & His Indian Wars*, 78-9.

sentenced by court martial to suffer death by shooting, that ceremony is now in the act of execution. I regret exceedingly that Genl. Doherty's Brigade is not present to witness it.¹⁵

John Wood's offence, a side from desertion, in Jackson's words, was "an incorrigible disposition of the heart, a rebellious and obstinate temper of mind, which, as it cannot be rectified, ought not to be permitted to diffuse its influence amongst others."¹⁶ It is revealing that Jackson's bloodlust, in full motion on March 14, 1814, is coolly reported with no indication of the travesties befallen the Red Sticks.¹⁷ Instead, Jackson's megalomaniacal focus is on punishing the member of his own who refused to partake in the slaughter.

After the destruction of Tohopeka, only a small number of Red Sticks managed to escape and find refuge with the Seminoles to the south. Jackson used the incident to contribute to the growing acceptance of his expansionist and genocidal vision. Even with their defeat and eradication, the militant Red Sticks were invoked by Jackson as symbolic evidence of the endless potential for Indigenous insurgency. The example of defiance displayed by the Red Sticks, and especially, according to Gloria Jahoda, Creek Chief "Red Eagle's leadership in war" had "angered America. It had also convinced Andrew Jackson that America's frontiers would always be frontiers while there were Indians to annoy the settlers." The final solution for American policymakers, as Jahoda puts bluntly, was "the Indians must go. They couldn't be exterminated

¹⁵ John Spencer Bassett, ed., *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, Volume I* (Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1926), 481.

¹⁶ Bassett, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, Vol I*, 480.

¹⁷ Grenier describes the acceleration of the campaigns against the Red Sticks, and the heightening of the Creek War starting in November of 1813. A trail of death and destruction followed Jackson's Tennessee militia through Creek territory, culminating in the massacre of March 27, 1814. See: Grenier, *The First Way of War*, 214-20.

wholesale because of world opinion. But they could be uprooted and packed off to some remote corner of the country where they wouldn't be in the way.”¹⁸

With the Indian Removal Act of 1830, a law was imposed which instituted a mass relocation program for Indigenous people, dispossessing them of lands east of the Mississippi River and removing them to foreign territory in Oklahoma.¹⁹ Presaging Malaysia's “New Villages” and Vietnam's “Strategic Hamlets” by over a century, the “Trail of Tears” was a counterinsurgency operation with genocidal intent. In frustrated anticipation of propelling the removal process forward, Jackson intimidated the Choctaw and Chickasaw chiefs into agreeing to his terms without hesitation. In a letter written in August 1830, barely a month after approval of the Indian Removal Act, Jackson warned:

It was a measure I had much at heart and sought to effect because I was satisfied that the Indians could not possibly live under the laws of the States. If now they shall refuse to accept the liberal terms offered, they only must be liable for whatever evils and difficulties may arise. I feel conscious of having done my duty to my red children and if any failure of my good intention arises, it will be attributable to their want of duty to themselves, not me. I have directed the Secretary of War to write [the Choctaw]...make it known to my red children, and tell them to listen well to it – it comes from a friend and the last time I shall address them on the subject should the chiefs fail to meet us now.²⁰

Indigenous people and culture, and not only their warriors, were categorized as subversive. Legislated through the Indian Removal Act, the anti-civilian nature of American counterinsurgency doctrine once again came to the fore. As Remini noted “Jackson wanted a quick ending to the Indian problem, and he achieved it. In his eight years in office some seventy-

¹⁸ Jahoda, *The Trail of Tears*, 17.

¹⁹ Ward Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide: Holocaust and Denial in the Americas 1492 to the Present* (San Francisco: City Lights, 1997), 143-6.

²⁰ John Spencer Bassett, ed., *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, Volume IV* (Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1929), 169.

odd treaties were signed and ratified, adding to the public domain approximately 100 million acres of Indian land in the east...and 32 million acres of land west of the Mississippi River.” For those who did not die on the forced marches, the fates of the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw and Creek was permanent internment under the American state. “The cost in human lives and suffering” adds Remini, “was incalculable.”²¹

Mirroring Roman objections to the Germanic “barbarian” tribes, the American disregard for the Indigenous tribes of North America was rooted not only in spatial strategies of imperial expansion, but also in fear of existential, subversive threats to the American order. As Rogin explains, the elites who had power in the United States “objected to tribal life not simply because it was different from their own, but also because it provided a source of resistance to their aims.” Most Indigenous people vehemently “resisted imposition of an externalized ‘false-self system’ which would make [them] malleable. White policy-makers sought to break apart the Indians’ extended family and ecological ties, and substitute a hierarchal, non-kinship-based paternal authority.”²² Perhaps the most blatant assertion of this dominance, and a favoured protocol of Andrew Jackson, was the practice of American presidents being referred to as “the Great Father” by the various Indigenous tribes relegated to subjugation.

The few remaining Red Sticks who had escaped Jackson’s final assault of 1814 ventured south towards the Gulf Coast. There, they would join the Seminole tribe, who, in addition to being subject to the terms of the Indian Removal Act, were already engaged in a protracted resistance to invasion from the United States. Author George Walton, writing in his history of the Seminole, asserts “the most important of the Creek migrations into Florida” occurred “following the defeat of the Red Stick by General Andrew Jackson and his Tennessee Militia.”

²¹ Remini, *Andrew Jackson & His Indian Wars*, 238.

²² Rogin, *Fathers and Children*, 209.

While the defeat of the Red Stick “forced the Creek Confederacy to...cede two-thirds of their territory,” the Red Stick could not “reconcile themselves to the harsh treaty” and “fled southward.” The Creeks would strengthen the Seminole, as, for example, “among these refugees was a boy whom the whites later called Osceola,” the famous Seminole chief.²³ According to anthropologist Brent Weisman, “the Florida Red Sticks, although never great in number, contributed a strong undercurrent of anti-American sentiment to the Seminole.” Exposed to Jackson’s brutality, “they had experienced firsthand the consequences of American intentions, and they knew how the American presence could divide native society. Yet they also knew that resistance was possible, at least for a time.”²⁴

The Seminole Wars, though spanning a century, continue to be an obscured and misunderstood chapter in American history. The accepted narrative of three separate wars between the United States and the Seminole, occurring in 1817-1818, 1835-1842, and 1855-58, does not accurately portray the extent of the American campaign of counterinsurgency and attrition. Broadening the chronology of the Seminole Wars from 1763 to 1858, professor of history William Belko writes:

The traditional American dates provided for this conflict certainly fail miserably in assessing accurately the Seminole perspective. For them, the four decades from the War of 1812 to the eve of the U.S. Civil War proved to be a continuous fight for survival, an uninterrupted record of resistance, with no peace or rest in between – a history of conflict that commenced before American independence.²⁵

²³ George Walton, *Fearless and Free: The Seminole Indian War, 1835-1842* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1977), 23.

²⁴ Brent Richards Weisman, *Unconquered People: Florida’s Seminole and Miccosukee Indians* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999), 48.

²⁵ William S. Belko, ed., *America’s Hundred Years’ War: U.S. Expansion to the Gulf Coast and the Fate of the Seminole, 1763-1858* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011), 6.

Throughout this time, the Seminole survived, in part, by bolstering their numbers and strength by adopting other Indigenous people, like the Creeks, who were fleeing the ravages of American expansion. The Seminole also had a long tradition of providing refuge to the many Africans who were fortunate enough to escape the slavery of the Southern plantations.

The insurgency of the Seminole and their African allies was completely unacceptable to officials in Washington. A general fear of slave insurrection, which was an ever-present factor in the American South, was fueled by rumours of sympathetic African forces in Haiti and Havana who were set to reinforce the Seminole resistance.²⁶ Racist paranoia took hold of white settlers who envisioned the spread of Indigenous and African rebellion. The periodic successes of the Seminole insurgency were used to rationalize amplified American aggression. Historian Samuel Watson describes the Seminole “1836 offensive” which “exceeded anything the United States had seen since the Creek War in 1813.” No other war up to that point “remotely approached the devastation and panic of the first months of 1836. Indeed, the Seminole, probably unwittingly, struck during a moment of great psychic tension in the American South, with controversy over the mailing of abolitionist tracts and a slave insurrection panic along the Mississippi in 1835.” Watson explains that, as a result, “the Seminole offensive helped unite white policymakers in favor of war.” The insurgency “angered and embarrassed military commanders, whose immediate reaction was to redeem the institution’s honor and seek revenge for their soldiers’ deaths through a counteroffensive... army commanders would not seek peace until they had punished the Indians for their temerity.”²⁷

²⁶ Matthew Clavin, “‘It is a negro, not an Indian war’: Southampton, St. Domingo, and the Second Seminole War” in, *America’s Hundred Years’ War*, 181-203.

²⁷ Samuel Watson, “Seminole Strategy, 1812-1858” in, *America’s Hundred Years’ War*, 166-7.

The vindictive and ruthless character of the American counterinsurgency campaign came forth as sadistic methods of conquest were tested on the Seminole. Because of the difficult terrain of the Florida swamps, and the survival skills of the Seminole, the United States military used the opportunity to field-test new weapons and strategy. George Walton writes that Florida's "Governor Call had developed a secret weapon" which was "importing bloodhounds from Cuba to use in tracking hostiles. The dogs had been successfully employed by the British against the Maroons in Jamaica in 1738, and had brought that eighty-year revolt to an end within a year." Walton adds that "when word of what was being contemplated became known, the Floridians were delighted."²⁸ The deployment of bloodhounds was part of the American military's ever-expanding psychological warfare program. Hunting-dogs were merely one aspect of a wider initiative, whose main objective was to menace and terrorize the Seminole people, and especially non-combatants, into submission.

Historian Samuel Watson also considers the heightened use of terror and psychological warfare by the United States against Seminole women and children as a decisive factor in extinguishing the overall will to resist, "as families were divided and those held captive sought reunification by attempting to persuade others to surrender."²⁹ The Seminole did not go quietly, as the American "regular army saw 1,466 deaths, 74 of them officers." This was in no way a glorious victory for the Seminole, when "over seven years of war [1835-1842], 4,420 Seminoles had been captured and deported to Indian territory."³⁰ According to historian Ward Churchill, the American commitment to destroying the Seminole example of resistance led to the war of 1835-1842 being "the most proportionately expensive conflict in American history."³¹ Watson notes

²⁸ Walton, *Fearless and Free*, 205.

²⁹ Watson, "Seminole Strategy", 168.

³⁰ Weisman, *Unconquered People*, 57-8.

³¹ Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide*, 217.

that “small as the regular army was, the [U.S.] government committed half of it to Florida.” Professor Weisman adds “the net result of the war of 1842 was fewer than 300 Seminoles remaining in Florida where there had once been nearly five thousand.”³²

As the war dragged on over decades, many Seminole “felt compelled to adopt a new, necessarily more accommodationist strategy for social and cultural survival and cohesion: reuniting their families, and whatever Seminole nation they believed to exist, in the [reservation lands of the] west.” While some of those captured became guides and interpreters, the Seminole imprisoned during American counterinsurgency were most valuable to the United States “above all as emotional pressure on their kin” which worked “to draw resisters west” to internment on reservation lands.³³ Yet, “while the Seminoles suffered extensive casualties and a number of them eventually submitted to removal,” Churchill explains, “a sizable segment withdrew into the Everglades swamp country, from whence they were never dislodged.”³⁴

The sustained ferocity displayed by Americans in their war against the Seminole was undeniably motivated by a racist logic and worldview, and a consistent, vindictive aggression for any people recalcitrant to imperial rule. American counterinsurgency did not always discriminate, or eliminate, based solely on factors related to race or Indigeneity. Undoubtedly, the American counterinsurgency campaign against the Seminole was legitimized and fueled by the public acceptance of genocidal expansion based on racism. However, as Walton explains, more important for the United States military, was the training and experience in irregular warfare gained by the men who fought in the Seminole War:

Only those officers who were seriously interested in a military career – who wanted to be soldiers – remained in the army. Having served and learned in combat, under conditions as hard as they

³² Weisman, *Unconquered People*, 50.

³³ Watson, “Seminole Strategy”, 168.

³⁴ Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide*, 217.

could ever know, the officers who continued on duty went on to participate, many of them with great distinction, in the Mexican War, the Civil War, and against the Indians on the plains. Florida was the training ground for these conflicts.³⁵

General William Tecumseh Sherman, who was quite possibly the most prolific purveyor of counterinsurgency in American history, was one of these officers. During the Civil War, “through the experience of fighting guerrilla war and campaigning in the South, culminating in the burning of Jackson, Sherman had enlarged the range of his rage to include all Southern civilians as legitimate targets.”³⁶ General Sherman demonstrated that the American doctrine of counterinsurgency would be imposed upon any population, regardless of race, who were perceived as an impediment to progress.

After graduating from West Point in June of 1840, Sherman “received orders assigning him to Company A, Third Artillery, in Florida.”³⁷ It was here, ensconced in the quagmire of a guerrilla war fought in the Everglades, where, as historian Charles Vetter recounts, it became “obvious to Sherman that the traditional techniques of warfare taught at West Point and advocated in the army manuals were ineffective. He was opposed to parleys and treaties, believing that confidence could not be placed in the Indians’ promises.” It was during the Seminole Wars that Sherman developed his own vision of counterinsurgency warfare, a doctrine which gained infamy after use against the Confederacy in the Civil War. Sherman believed that “to implement such a strategy” against the Seminole, required that “the army should establish and maintain a system of raiding villages, burning cabins, destroying corn, and killing cattle.” It was thought

³⁵ Walton, *Fearless and Free*, 239.

³⁶ Michael Fellman, *Citizen Sherman: A Life of William Tecumseh Sherman* (New York: Random House, 1995), 148.

³⁷ Charles Edmund Vetter, *Sherman: Merchant of Terror, Advocate of Peace* (Gretna: Pelican, 1992), 34.

that “these tactics would eventually break the Indians’ morale and bring strategic success.”

Vetter insists that the American counterinsurgency experiment in Florida and “the Seminole experience remained with Sherman and would influence him in ways different from others who fought the Indians. In the future Sherman would...reach back to this experience, and apply the same techniques to the whites of the South.”³⁸

“During the Civil War, most famously in the siege of Atlanta” recounts historian Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, “[Sherman] made his mark as a proponent and practitioner of total war, scorched-earth campaigns against civilians, particularly targeting their food supplies.” Dunbar-Ortiz adds, quite suitably, “this had long been the colonial and US American way of war against the Indigenous peoples east of the Mississippi.”³⁹ Vetter argues that General Sherman had understood Confederate rebellion in terms that:

These people had, by choice, rejected the laws of the Constitution, and in doing so, provided justification for Sherman’s use of military force against the civilian population. Such action...would demoralize the noncombatants, and in turn, have a negative effect on the soldiers of the Confederate armies...his decision to make war on noncombatants was for the purpose of creating social disorganization in the lives of Southerners. Families were to be uprooted, communities devastated, institutions made dysfunctional, and local inhabitants set adrift. By his actions he intended to disturb the social cohesion of the South in such a way as to destroy the Southerners’ will to continue the war.⁴⁰

Union army terrorism against the civilians of the Confederacy was a continuation of a long tradition that Sherman had first acquired during the Seminole Wars, or “Jackson’s War.” As a

³⁸ Vetter, *Sherman*, 35.

³⁹ Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States*, 144-5.

⁴⁰ Vetter, *Sherman*, 138-9.

disciple of Jackson, and in conforming to the psychological profile of the counterinsurgent, Sherman blamed the Southern population for resisting the invasion from the North.⁴¹

Biographer Michael Fellman claims that Sherman manipulated the guerrilla warfare waged by the South as a justification for “encouraging his men to campaign boldly against guerrillas and their civilian supporters” in doing so “Sherman learned to justify their excesses, in effect covering up Union wrongdoing, a key element of the corrupting qualities of counterinsurgent warfare.” Tumbling headlong into an abyss of historic proportions, “what remained was for Sherman to up the stakes of guerrilla war, and then to generalize from counterinsurgency into a policy of carrying the war more and more against the civilian portion of the Confederate rebellion.”⁴²

A regiment of anti-civilian tactics, including a half-hearted attempt to persuade all non-combatants to evacuate during the siege of Atlanta, were patterned on earlier counterinsurgency measures, notably, Jackson’s Indian Removal Act. Clearly, the blueprint for American counterinsurgency which developed under Andrew Jackson during the Creek and Seminole Wars, and subsequently through the legal precedent of “Indigenous removal”, had left an undeniable imprint on the mind of General William Tecumseh Sherman.

The duplicity of General Sherman’s psychological warfare campaigns was especially useful in his capture of Atlanta. By his own account, Sherman used deception, threats, and subterfuge to confuse, frustrate and weaken his enemy. In correspondence with Confederate General John Bell Hood, Sherman ordered Hood to evacuate the citizens of Atlanta, because the removal, being,

⁴¹ In no way should this argument be mistaken for an endorsement of the Southern Confederate cause. To call the Soviet assault on Germany at the end of World War II an “invasion” is not a supportive comment for the Nazi regime. What makes the case of General Sherman important is that civilians and non-combatants became the primary target in his brand of warfare.

⁴² Fellman, *Citizen Sherman*, 141.

“satisfactory to the Government of the United States, it makes no difference whether it pleases General Hood and *his* people or not.” Sherman warned that refusal to comply “will make it necessary to destroy the very houses used by families as residences.”⁴³

In panicked response, General Hood wrote Sherman, pleading:

Permit me to say that the unprecedented measure you propose transcends, in studied and ingenious cruelty, all acts ever before brought to my attention in the dark history of war. In the name of God and humanity, I protest, believing that you will find that you are expelling from their homes and firesides the wives and children of a brave people.⁴⁴

Unmoved, Sherman’s offer to Hood is an unchanged ultimatum, this time insinuating the Confederacy would be to blame for any atrocities imposed on the civilian population:

I say that it is kindness to these families of Atlanta to remove them now, at once, from scenes that women and children should not be exposed to, and the “brave people” should scorn to commit their wives and children to the rude barbarians who thus, as you say, violate the laws of war, as illustrated in the pages of its dark history. In the name of common-sense, I ask you not to appeal to a just God in such a sacrilegious manner...if we must be enemies, let us be men, and fight it out as we propose to do, and not deal in such hypocritical appeals to God and humanity. God will judge us in due time, and he will pronounce whether it be more humane to fight with a town full of women and the families of a brave people at our back, or to remove them in time to places of safety among their own friends and people.⁴⁵

Having intimate knowledge of Sherman’s scorched-Earth tactics and counterinsurgency warfare against the citizens of the South, and offended by Sherman’s trickery, coercion, and hypocrisy, General Hood ends his communication by writing:

⁴³ William T. Sherman, *Memoirs of General William T. Sherman, Vol. II* (New York: Charles L. Webster, 1891), 118.

⁴⁴ Sherman, *Memoirs of General William T. Sherman*, 119.

⁴⁵ Sherman, *Memoirs of General William T. Sherman*, 120-1.

If there was any fault...it was your own, in not giving notice, especially in the case of Atlanta, of your purpose to shell the town, which is usual in war among civilized nations...there are a hundred thousand witnesses that you fired into the habitations of women and children for weeks, firing far above and miles beyond my line of defense. I have too good an opinion, founded both upon observation and experience, of the skill of your artillerists, to credit the insinuation that they for several weeks unintentionally fired too high for my modest field-works, and slaughtered women and children by accident and want of skill.⁴⁶

Conceptualized and field-tested in war against the Seminole, and with his pillage and destruction of Atlanta, “Sherman had succeeded in bringing sociological warfare [to the South]...a sense of hopelessness began to grow in the hearts and minds of those who had experienced the horror of Sherman’s army, and to Sherman it was evident everywhere he looked.” Vetter observes that “initial anger upon hearing of Sherman’s activities against the noncombatants soon turned to anxious concern for the safety and welfare of their [Confederate soldiers] families. Depression gripped many as...some soldiers began to slip away from their ranks and headed home. Sherman’s method of warfare was having its effect.”⁴⁷

General Sherman’s capture of Atlanta is widely considered the death knell of Confederate resistance and the beginning of the end of the American Civil War. Sherman’s brand of warfare, inspired by Andrew Jackson’s counterinsurgency doctrine, had won the war. As the United States expanded westward after the Civil War, counterinsurgency techniques were modified, specialized, and deployed in a war of extermination against the Indigenous tribes of the Great Plains, the deserts of the Southwest, and the rainforests of the Pacific Northwest. In many ways, the tragic story of Crazy Horse of the Oglala Sioux indicates the direction of counterinsurgency on the cusp of America’s consolidation of a global empire.

⁴⁶ Sherman, *Memoirs of General William T. Sherman*, 121-2.

⁴⁷ Vetter, *Sherman*, 166-7.

Crazy Horse, defender of the Black Hills in Dakota territory, had resisted surrender to the U.S. Army as the leadership of various factions of Sioux, Arapaho, and Cheyenne capitulated under a brutal and inhumane war of attrition. The government of the United States prioritized Crazy Horse as an especially dangerous adversary; his defeat of Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer in June 1876 at the Battle of the Little Bighorn solidified his status as a target for elimination. The refusal of Crazy Horse to cede the Black Hills to the United States angered government officials who had relative success in coopting other members of the Lakota leadership, like the highly respected and influential Red Cloud. “In Washington” explains professor of history Kingsley Bray:

Opinions were hardening. Within a week of the breakdown of the Black Hills summit, President Grant telegraphed General Sheridan to attend a White House emergency session...General Crook, as Sheridan’s field commander on the ground, completed the roll of top brass and high officialdom. In conditions of high secrecy, the summit meeting projected a strategy to neutralize the Lakota threat and seize the Black Hills.⁴⁸

For Generals “Sheridan and Sherman,” the resistance of the Oglala under Crazy Horse was unacceptable, “the military chiefs had agreed on a strategy of ensuring total surrenders followed by agency relocations to the Missouri River.”⁴⁹ This began as a “directive from Washington proposed to start reducing the power of the Indian chiefs by taking away their right to distribute rations and supplies to their own bands.”⁵⁰ This policy was accelerated with the government decision to “turn the administration of the [Indigenous] agencies over to the military.”⁵¹

⁴⁸ Kingsley M. Bray, *Crazy Horse: A Lakota Life* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006), 192.

⁴⁹ Bray, *Crazy Horse*, 302.

⁵⁰ Edward & Mabell Kadlcek, *To Kill an Eagle: Indian Views on the Last Days of Crazy Horse* (Boulder: Johnson Publishing, 1981), 32.

⁵¹ E & M Kadlcek, *To Kill an Eagle*, 34.

For the Lakota, the American strategy of land acquisition, while heavily reliant on the threat and use of force, was also based on coercion and cooptation. The attempt to divide Indigenous people and turn them against Crazy Horse was a main tactic. According to a compilation of interviews with participants in these events, “when General Crook came to Camp Robinson, he called for a council with the chiefs, and again all came except Crazy Horse. Crook explained that it was their duty to control Crazy Horse.” The government of the United States and “the military leaders believed that if Crazy Horse were taken away, his followers would be controlled and the move to the Missouri could be effectively carried out.” To facilitate his surrender “in addition to telling the chiefs to capture Crazy Horse, the officers ordered the scouts to bring him in. The scouts and a large number of other armed Indians and a large force of white soldiers set out to take Crazy Horse.”⁵²

Through its war against Crazy Horse, the American invasion of Lakota territory became a space for the U.S. military to engineer networks of Indigenous spies, informers and saboteurs. The development of a surveillance apparatus reliant on “turned” Indigenous proxies, a practice finding global prevalence in the 20th century, would be instrumental in the defeat of Crazy Horse. Professor Bray insists General Crook had infiltrated the Sioux council with informers. “Crook had arrived at the Oglala agency...to enlist scouts. He also privately recruited a number of spies to infiltrate Crazy Horse’s village. The informers’ instructions were to talk up surrender, subtly undermine northern [Lakota] morale, and report on village movements.”⁵³ In the end, American tactics of psychological warfare would compromise Crazy Horse and his followers, as suspicion, paranoia, and distrust led to the ultimate disintegration of cohesion among the Lakota people.

⁵² E & M Kadlacek, *To Kill an Eagle*, 50.

⁵³ Bray, *Crazy Horse*, 248.

“Crazy Horse eventually brought in his people late in the spring of 1877” wrote historians Edward and Mabell Kadlecek. “When other bands had succumbed to the lure of army gifts and treaties, Crazy Horse had led his band away into the prairies and mountains where they could live and worship in the traditions of their forefathers.” As his people faced starvation and freezing temperatures, Crazy Horse was finally convinced by a former “turned” ally, Red Cloud, to bring his people to Fort Robinson with a promise from the United States of a territory in Powder River country. “At last there was nothing more he could do. His people needed food because the killing of the buffalo had destroyed their food source.”⁵⁴ Slaughtering the buffalo herds, of course, was yet another aspect of American counterinsurgency doctrine.

Once at Fort Robinson, Crazy Horse became disgusted that his young men were immediately enlisted by the Americans to fight the Nez Percés, and “told the young men not to go against those other Indians far away, but some would not listen, and allowed themselves to be bought by the soldiers.”⁵⁵ Very soon, Crazy Horse would learn that Red Cloud had tricked him on behalf of the Americans. “Orders from Washington had been received at Camp Robinson directing that Crazy Horse be taken into custody. Although some Indians knew it, no one had told Crazy Horse that he was actually under arrest.” According to many witnesses at the scene, “from the manner in which he walked, it was apparent that he did not know he was to be imprisoned.” Of course, the promise of a reservation for Crazy Horse’s followers was a complete fabrication, while, “according to the army’s plans, Crazy Horse was to be removed from the camp at midnight and taken by rail to the Dry Tortugas, a group of islands off the coast of Florida.”⁵⁶

⁵⁴ E & M Kadlecek, *To Kill an Eagle*, 37.

⁵⁵ Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1970), 310.

⁵⁶ E & M Kadlecek, *To Kill an Eagle*, 52.

Betrayed and lied to by the Americans and their “turned” Indigenous allies, Crazy Horse was assassinated trying to escape captivity, sadly, while being escorted to a cage by Little Big Man, another former ally “the white men had bought...and made...into an agency policeman.”⁵⁷ Lured by the temptations of personal power and privilege promised to him by the American invaders, Little Big Man was involved directly in the assassination of Crazy Horse. While American soldiers stabbed Crazy Horse with their bayonets, Little Big Man prevented his escape, holding him tightly by the arms. Like Red Cloud, “Little Big Man had also become envious. He wanted Crazy Horse out of the way.”⁵⁸

A cursory examination of the legacies of Andrew Jackson and William Sherman reveal an historically habitual tendency for aggressive anti-subversive policy in the United States. The Creek War, Seminole War, Civil War, and Plains War provided a diagram for the operating characteristics which defined American counterinsurgency during continental westward expansion. As Ward Churchill writes “techniques of domination have been consistently field-tested in Native North America, a matter allowing their refinement before they are introduced into other settings at home and abroad.”⁵⁹ Eventually, these techniques became the guiding blueprint for the global spread of the American empire which was to emerge at the end of the 19th century.

⁵⁷ Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, 312.

⁵⁸ E & M Kadlecek, *To Kill an Eagle*, 48.

⁵⁹ Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide*, 341.

Chapter III

Global Empire in the American Century

During the administration of President Benjamin Harrison, his secretary of state, James Blaine, “agitated constantly for expansion.” Historian John Tone informs us that Blaine advised Harrison “in 1891 simply to take Hawaii, Cuba, and Puerto Rico.” Hawaii would become the first of America’s extra-continental territories, when, “in 1893, during the second Cleveland administration, white planters and American troops deposed Queen Liliuokalani to prevent the adoption of a new democratic constitution that would have given power to the native Hawaiian majority.” Not completely satisfied with rule by proxy, “the United States annexed Hawaii directly in 1898.”⁶⁰ That same year, the McKinley administration successfully obtained several more colonial assets through war with Spain. Following an American military victory and a peace treaty in December 1898, “Spain surrendered Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam”⁶¹ to the United States.

In 1902, the administration of Theodore Roosevelt intervened in support of Panamanian secession from Colombia. While “U.S. warships kept the Colombian Navy at bay,” Roosevelt “ordered the Navy to prevent Colombia from landing troops against an uprising.” With the construction and ownership of the Panama Canal being the prize, the highly-coveted zone was ceded to the United States by a 1903 agreement “infamously known as the treaty that no Panamanian signed.”⁶²

⁶⁰ John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 246.

⁶¹ Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 282.

⁶² John Lindsay-Poland, *Emperors in the Jungle: The Hidden History of the U.S. in Panama* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 25.

The American military immediately harvested these newly acquired spaces as laboratories of subjugation and control. In Cuba, Puerto Rico, and to an even greater extent the Philippines, increasingly sophisticated and technical programs of anti-subversive suppression were preemptively employed in any area of American strategic interest. Historian Alfred McCoy, in his expansive study of US-Filipino relations, best illustrates this development in modern American counterinsurgency warfare:

Through a prolonged pacification after 1898, the U.S. Army plunged into a crucible of counterinsurgency, forging a security apparatus that helped form the Philippine polity and transform the American state...armed with cutting-edge technology from its antecedent information revolution, America's colonial regime created the most modern police and intelligence units found anywhere under the U.S. flag. This imperial panopticon slowly suffocated the Filipino revolutionary movement with a combination of firepower, surveillance, and incriminating information...the United States realized the coercive potential of its new information technologies from its colonization of the Philippines.⁶³

At the same time, McCoy emphasizes that “the impact of colonial pacification was not contained at this remote periphery” but migrated “homeward through both personnel and policies...as an omnipresent, sub rosa matrix that honeycombed U.S. society with active informers, secretive civilian organizations, and government counterintelligence agencies.”⁶⁴ For America, the pattern of exporting and re-importing techniques and technologies of repression would come to repeat itself over the course of the 20th century.

From the outset of its imperial aspirations, American trained-and-equipped proxy police were the primary component in the installation of U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine abroad. In his exhaustively researched account, professor Ethan Nadelmann documents the roots of this

⁶³ Alfred W. McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 521.

⁶⁴ McCoy, *Policing America's Empire*, *ibid.*

practice, where “in Cuba, the first country to receive U.S. police assistance, the U.S. Marines created, trained, and equipped a constabulary following the 1898 occupation, and retired New York City police officers helped organize the Havana police system.” In addition to parallel projects in the Philippines and Puerto Rico, “the U.S. War Department established additional constabularies in Haiti in 1915, the Dominican Republic in 1916, and Panama in 1918, and the State Department arranged a private contract whereby a former U.S. officer in the Philippine Constabulary was hired to organize the Nicaragua Constabulary.”⁶⁵

Thus, a revolving-door of experienced veterans of wars of colonization, and members of the police services within the United States, contributed to the growth of a rapidly expanding economy based on the proliferation of counterinsurgency doctrine and practice. Undoubtedly, another significant engine in this development was, as professor Gabriel Kolko describes, “the relationship between the objectives of [US] foreign economic policy and direct political and military intervention” which, according to Kolko, “has been a continuous and intimate one.” Indeed, they are “very often identical.”⁶⁶ Professor Peter Dale Scott points to companies like Lockheed, Boeing, General Dynamics, and Brown & Root as but a few examples of “the forces lobbying permanently for increased militarization” whose number “are too many to be enumerated.”⁶⁷ In sum, there were many incentives for private investors and state actors encouraged by the enormous economic potential of the ongoing legislative, financial and material support of counterinsurgency abroad, and increasingly, within the United States itself.

⁶⁵ Ethan A. Nadelmann, *Cops Across Borders: The Internationalization of U.S. Criminal Law Enforcement* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 111-2.

⁶⁶ Gabriel Kolko, *The Roots of American Foreign Policy: An Analysis of Power and Purpose* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), 81.

⁶⁷ Peter Dale Scott, *The War Conspiracy: JFK, 9/11, and the Deep Politics of War* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2008), 379.

The two World Wars made an unmistakable contribution to solidifying the psychological acceptance and normalcy of constant war-time expenditures, measures and preparations during peacetime. As C. Wright Mills correctly deduced:

What the main drift of the twentieth century has revealed is that as the economy has become concentrated and incorporated into great hierarchies, the military has become enlarged and decisive to the shape of the entire economic structure; and, moreover, the economic and the military have become structurally and deeply interrelated, as the economy has become a seemingly permanent war economy; and military men and policies have increasingly penetrated the corporate economy.⁶⁸

Mills, ominously, made the point that “if the military metaphysics, to which the civilian elite now clings, are accepted, then by definition warfare is the only reality, that is to say, the necessity, of our time.”⁶⁹ The Cold War became symptomatic of this psychology of perpetual warfare; and spawned further paradigms like the building of ridiculously large and destructive nuclear arsenals. Because of the almost guaranteed mutual annihilation of a nuclear conflict, the two World Wars also inadvertently opened another gateway to a future economy invested in the type of low-intensity, internal warfare characteristic of counterinsurgency.⁷⁰

With the coming to office of President John F. Kennedy, professor Kolko writes that:

By August 1962, when the NSC approved national policy on a grand strategy toward the Third World, virtually everyone of importance agreed that confronting internal disorder and insurgency in the Third World – or Sino-Soviet ‘conquest from within’, as opposed to conventional warfare – was essential. The NSC favored a greater readiness to act even when there was no direct Russian

⁶⁸ C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), 215.

⁶⁹ Mills, *The Power Elite*, 202.

⁷⁰ See comments of Lyman Lemnitzer, Kennedy administration chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, of: “...an action program designed to defeat the Communists without recourse to the hazard...of nuclear war.” D. Michael Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms: The Failure of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 20.

or Chinese involvement but where they might gain objectively from ‘other types of subversion’ inimical to U.S. interests.⁷¹

As we have seen, counterinsurgency was not a foreign concept in past American experience of war, or to administrations prior to that of JFK. As Mills, Kolko, Scott, and many others have pointed out, the rapid growth and expansion of the military-industrial political economy during and after World War II had a direct and undeniably singular effect on American policy. In addition, certainly, a faith in modern technology and liberal notions of free enterprise played an important role in the focus and formulation of Kennedy-era counterinsurgency doctrine. More significant, however, was JFK’s conformity to a pattern that had been established by men like Andrew Jackson and William Sherman. Like Kennedy, the hallmark of their brand of warfare was that it was directed exclusively inward, and the main target of violence was not an opposing army, or even necessarily a guerrilla force, but the non-combatant civilian population.

⁷¹ Gabriel Kolko, *Confronting the Third World: United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1980* (New York: Pantheon, 1988), 130.

Chapter IV

Camelot, Modernization Theory & the Special Group on Counterinsurgency

Despite the popularity of revisionist histories which paint the Kennedy administration as a gathering of progressive “peaceniks”, the historical record confirms, from its beginnings, an expansionist and interventionist Camelot.⁷² Kennedy was firm in his conviction to capitalize on the wave of anti-communist sentiment following the perceived loss of China to Mao, the bloody stalemate in Korea, and the successful overthrow of dictator Fulgencio Batista by guerrilla forces in Cuba. In the run-up to the 1960 presidential election, historian David Schmitz writes “Kennedy spoke so often during the campaign about Cuba and Castro that those who did not follow politics could be forgiven if they came to think he was running against Fidel Castro and not Richard Nixon.” Schmitz adds that Kennedy was determined to “take the initiative once again in the Cold War struggles in the Third World” and that he “devoted his entire inaugural address to foreign policy and made it clear that his would be an activist administration.”⁷³ Far from a peace-seeking isolationist, Kennedy embraced and touted expansion and intervention as the noblest of pathways. Under JFK, American aggression was rationalized not only as a strategic necessity, but also as a moral imperative.

According to the Kennedy administration, somehow, U.S. imperialism would differ from the European version, a system of empire and wealth which the United States was eager to see both dismantled and appropriated. Under the guise of supporting decolonization, the self-serving

⁷² For two opposing viewpoints on the topic, see: Noam Chomsky, *Rethinking Camelot: JFK, the Vietnam War, and U.S. Political Culture* (Montreal: Black Rose, 1993); and: David Talbot, *Brothers: The Hidden History of the Kennedy Years* (New York: Free Press, 2007).

⁷³ David F. Schmitz, *Thank God They're on Our Side: The United-States & Right-Wing Dictatorships, 1921-1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 234-5.

cynicism of the Kennedy administration was barely concealed beneath a façade of helpful American paternalism throughout the Third World.⁷⁴ To create and propagate the false-image of benevolent, non-imperial U.S. global expansion and domination, JFK surrounded himself with a stable of arrogant, pragmatic, and brash thinkers. Kolko describes these “articulate intellectuals who comprised his advisers” as possessing “unlimited self-esteem [which] convinced virtually all of them that with a proper application of their thought and U.S. resources they could accomplish far more and far better, not just in the Third World but everywhere.”⁷⁵

For JFK’s inner-circle, an integral aspect of this logic was figuring out how to halt the momentum of popular guerrilla movements led by charismatic leaders like Mao, Che Guevara, and Ho Chi Minh. President Kennedy was no stranger to policy guided by conceit, as biographer David Talbot writes: “with his youth, Catholicism, movie-star looks, and progressive appeal, JFK thought he could out-market even the dashing Fidel and Che in the war of ideas, selling democratic reform as an alternative to armed revolution.”⁷⁶ Through the dispersal of foreign aid packages, this strategy came across through programs for democratic reform and economic development like the Alliance for Progress and the Peace Corps.⁷⁷ For the recipients of American foreign aid, the other side, or underside, of this arrangement was the mandatory embedment of counterinsurgency operations within any promise of assistance; in addition to

⁷⁴ For a review of the most significant of these early counterinsurgency-as-foreign-aid programs, see Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and “Nation Building” in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); see chapters 3, 4 and 5 for analysis, respectively, of the Alliance for Progress, the Peace Corps, and the Strategic Hamlet Program – three signature Kennedy era foreign aid/counterinsurgency programs.

⁷⁵ Kolko, *Confronting the Third World*, 128.

⁷⁶ Talbot, *Brothers*, 62.

⁷⁷ See: Jeffrey E. Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy: The Alliance for Progress in Latin America* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

military hardware, usually in the form of police training facilitated through U.S. intelligence advisers.

On January 18, 1962, John F. Kennedy would solidify his implementation of American counterrevolution in the Third World with National Security Action Memorandum 124, where the president's "Special Group (Counter-Insurgency)" was first established. NSAM 124 spelled out that the Special Group, composed of many of the highest ranking individuals in government, would: "insure proper recognition throughout the U.S. Government that subversive insurgency ('wars of liberation') is a major form of politico-military conflict equal in importance to conventional warfare", and that "such recognition is reflected in the organization, training, equipment and doctrine of the U.S. Armed Forces and other U.S. agencies abroad and in political, economic, intelligence, military aid and informational programs conducted abroad by State, Defense, AID, USIA and CIA."⁷⁸

The Special Group (C.I.) consisted of president Kennedy's personal representative on the committee, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Lyman Lemnitzer, Director of Central Intelligence John McCone, National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy, USIA head Edward R. Murrow, and General Maxwell Taylor, among others. The executive branch was quick to seek outside input from both theorists and practitioners of counterinsurgency. The order of the day was to meld the liberal sensibilities of Ivy League academics with the experience of professional insurgents and counterinsurgents. Political scientist D. Michael Schafer strongly endorses the view that one of the:

...most striking aspects of the Kennedy administration's assault on the problem of insurgency and counterinsurgency was its effort to understand both. Counterinsurgency doctrine put academic

⁷⁸ Senator Mike Gravel, *The Pentagon Papers: The Defense Department History of United States Decisionmaking on Vietnam, Volume II* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), 660-1.

specialists to work marrying the most up-to-date theories of Third World development to a government doctrine for coping with its consequences. To supplement such efforts, the president read – and ordered his advisers to read – Mao, Giap and other architects of revolutionary theory...to develop it [counterinsurgency], the government turned to outside research organizations and the academic community.⁷⁹

The course of action taken by Kennedy and his Special Group on Counterinsurgency would lead directly to the embrace of “modernization theory,” a doctrine perceived as a palpable antidote to the populism of Marxist guerrilla movements and revolutionary wars.

A combination of economists, sociologists, and historians were employed with the task of creating the ultimate remedy to “wars of liberation”. In his study devoted to the subject, Michael Latham argues that during JFK’s time in office “modernization theorists seeking financial support, personal prestige, and an opportunity to contribute to their nation’s fight against the Communist specter found an eager audience for their work among the architects of U.S. foreign policy.” Latham adds that “the creation...of the Center for International Studies (CIS) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology provides a striking example of this attempt to couple objective theories of modernization with the Cold War struggle.”⁸⁰ Director of CIS Max Millikan, a professor of economics at MIT, “urged the diverse faculty he assembled at the Center to become ‘social science entrepreneurs.’”⁸¹

The Special Group on Counterinsurgency harnessed the talents of a cohort of like-minded free-market capitalists, many of whom had prior experience in a similar capacity as operatives

⁷⁹ Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 21.

⁸⁰ Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 54. The Center for International Studies at MIT was a pioneering counterinsurgency think-tank. “The Ford Foundation would provide the CIS with \$875,000 of initial monies...the Rockefeller Foundation and Carnegie Foundation would also contribute funds over the next decade.” Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2003), 158-9.

⁸¹ <http://www.cis.mit.edu/history>.

and analysts during World War II. Some of the more famous and influential among them were: Millikan, who was the ex-assistant director of the CIA, and the main advocate for the formation of the Peace Corps; John Kenneth Galbraith, famed liberal economist and Harvard professor, who was appointed ambassador to India under Kennedy; Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., an intelligence analyst for OSS during World War II, a professor of history at Harvard, and a speech writer and biographer of the Kennedy brothers; and Walt Rostow, a former OSS operative involved in Allied bomb-target coordination and the development of the Marshall Plan, a professor of economic history at MIT, director of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff under Kennedy, and eventually, National Security Adviser for Lyndon Johnson.⁸²

Most prevalent among this group in his relationship to Kennedy's counterinsurgency policy was Walt Rostow. Due primarily to wide recognition of his book, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*, Rostow became the main theoretician and spokesperson for modernization ideology. In his biography devoted to the Cold War architect, David Milne describes how under Kennedy:

Rostow worked diligently at the task to which he had devoted the bulk of his academic career: creating institutional machinery through which the United States could disperse foreign aid to the developing world. One day Rostow would advocate military steps that held the potential to precipitate nuclear war, the next he worked on establishing an expansive U.S. aid policy to combat world poverty.⁸³

⁸² For biographical information, see: Richard Harris Smith, *OSS: The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972); David Milne, *America's Rasputin: Walt Rostow and the Vietnam War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2008); John Patrick Diggins, ed., *The Liberal Persuasion: Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and the Challenge of the American Past* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); David A. Reisman, *Galbraith and Market Capitalism* (New York: New York University Press, 1980); Conrad Waligorski, *John Kenneth Galbraith: The Economist as Political Theorist* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006); Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*; Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future*.

⁸³ Milne, *America's Rasputin*, 95.

The paradox of balancing threats of annihilation with the promise of assisting people, an artform practiced, if not perfected, by Rostow, encapsulates the cynical hypocrisy governing the ethos of the modernization theorists.

Central to the tenets of modernization theory was Rostow's idea that communism was a destructive aberration of development, occurring when so-called "traditional" societies stumble in their conversion to "technological" or mass-consumption societies. "It is one particular form of modern society to which a nation may fall prey during the transitional process," wrote Rostow, "Communism is best understood as a disease of the transition to modernization."⁸⁴

Underpinning the logic and rhetoric of modernization theory was a refusal to acknowledge the sources of social injustice and inequity behind most revolutions. Communists were always portrayed as irrational, base opportunists, who understood only the diplomacy of violence. Rostow encouraged others "to read the learned works of Mao Tse-tung and Che Guevara on guerrilla warfare...without passion into the minds of one's enemies" and to "confront in guerrilla warfare in the underdeveloped areas a systematic attempt by the Communists to impose a serious disease on those societies attempting to transition to modernization." Peace or compromise, it appeared, was not an option. "I salute in particular" Rostow beamed to the hypothetical American counter-guerrilla "those among you whose duty it is...to prevent that disease if possible, and to eliminate it where it is imposed." Alongside the eradication of communist subversion, the job of the counterinsurgent "is not merely to accept the risks of war and to master its skills. Your job is to work with understanding, with your fellow citizens, in the whole creative process of modernization."⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Walt W. Rostow, "Countering Guerrilla Attack", in *Modern Guerrilla Warfare: Fighting Communist Guerrilla Movements, 1941-1961*, Franklin Mark Osanka, ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1962), 466.

⁸⁵ Rostow, "Countering Guerrilla Attack", 469-71.

In Rostow's opinion "the most important analytic assertion in Marx's writings is the assertion in the Communist Manifesto that capitalism 'left no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous cash payment.'" Incorporating more humanistic tones, by Rostow's logic the practitioners of modernization theory envisioned the world differently:

The stages-of-growth sequence man [anti-Marxist] is viewed as a more complex unit. He seeks, not merely economic advantage, but also power, leisure, adventure, continuity of experience and security; he is concerned with his family, the familiar values of his regional and national culture, and a bit of fun down at the local."⁸⁶

For this optimal American state-of-being to occur, according to Rostow, "Billions of human beings must live in the world, if we preserve it, over the century or so until the age of high mass-consumption becomes universal." And further, to avoid a future of Communism where "there may not be much civilization left to save," the "democratic north [must] face and deal with the challenge implicit in stages-of growth...at the full stretch of our commitment, our energy, and our resources."⁸⁷ Always implicit in Rostow's message was that the people of the so-called Third World were being tricked and manipulated by communists, and therefore could not think or plan for themselves. The solution to Third World ignorance, of course, was the helpful and steady hand of the United States, a model and mentor willing to guide others to modernity through free enterprise and unbridled consumption.

Modernization theory gained traction within the executive branch and came to control the overall direction and outlook of the Special Group on Counterinsurgency. As professor Michael Latham explains, eventually:

⁸⁶Walt W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), 149.

⁸⁷ Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth*, 166-7.

The president...called for a “national level school” to educate senior U.S. officials...Kennedy, national security adviser McGeorge Bundy, Walt Rostow, and Maxwell Taylor solicited proposals for an official “Modernization Institute” from the State and Defense departments before finally deciding that social scientific theory and counterinsurgency doctrine could be most effectively disseminated through a series of...seminars...taught at the State Department’s Foreign Service Institute.⁸⁸

The courses were taught by American instructors like Walt Rostow, Max Millikan and Lucian Pye from MIT’s Center for International Studies. There was also an effort to include other professionals with more field experience in counterinsurgency, most notably Ed Lansdale. “To the incoming Kennedy administration” writes historian Michael McClintock “there were few Americans more eminently qualified to advise on unconventional warfare and the American role in Indochina than Edward Geary Lansdale.”⁸⁹ A career in government began when Lansdale “left a lucrative career in a San Francisco advertising agency to serve in the Pacific with military intelligence and the OSS during World War II.” After the war, he was used in “the Philippines as a psychological warfare and counterinsurgency expert”⁹⁰ during the Huk rebellion.

Lansdale mystified Camelot’s modernization theorists. Fictionalized portrayals of his character in Graham Greene’s novel *The Quiet American*, and the Marlon Brando film *The Ugly American*, added to Lansdale’s legendary status. In his book on the General, professor Jonathan Nashel claims Walt Rostow was so taken with the celebrated spook that he “used language suggesting that Lansdale’s understanding of the Third World bordered on the omniscient.”⁹¹

⁸⁸ Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 166-7.

⁸⁹ Michael McClintock, *Instruments of Statecraft: U.S. Guerrilla Warfare, Counter-insurgency, and Counter-terrorism, 1940-1990* (New York: Pantheon, 1992), 198.

⁹⁰ Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 170.

⁹¹ Jonathan Nashel, *Edward Lansdale’s Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), 13. Wilford disputes the claim that Greene’s novel was based on Lansdale in *The Mighty Wurlitzer*.

President Kennedy was also impressed by the aura surrounding the CIA officer and psywar specialist, and in August 1962 “had specifically instructed Lansdale to testify before Congress on behalf of counterinsurgency in waging the Cold War” at a top-secret hearing.⁹² Having played a role in policy planning in Indochina during the Eisenhower administration “Lansdale was almost unique in pressing for the development of unconventional warfare capabilities” in Vietnam. According to McClintock, Lansdale was indispensable early in the formation of Kennedy’s counterinsurgency strategy precisely because “he differed from the military establishment...in recognizing that there was indeed a problem of insurgency in Vietnam, and not only the threat of a conventional invasion from the North.” Lansdale, in turn “was considered deeply profound by the incoming [Kennedy] administration.”⁹³

Indeed, as a proactive agent of change, John F. Kennedy had approved a counterinsurgency plan for Vietnam only eight days into his presidency; while at that same moment Lansdale, following a trip to see his close personal friends Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother Nhu, was formulating the first of many reports for JFK on the necessity of counterinsurgency in supporting the Diem regime in South Vietnam.⁹⁴ Despite a reputation for outlandish methods, Lansdale would create an undeniable mark on the world of American counterinsurgency:

His tactics included everything from rigging elections to using “black operations”, starting a rumor campaign based on local vampire legends, overseeing Philippine presidential campaign songs, using slush funds to buy off political opponents, and orchestrating a fraudulent second coming of Christ. They ranged from creating civic action programs to organizing counterinsurgent hit squads.⁹⁵

⁹²Nashel, *Edward Lansdale’s Cold War*, 91.

⁹³McClintock, *Instruments of Statecraft*, 199.

⁹⁴ Gravel, *The Pentagon Papers*, 6-7.

⁹⁵ Nashel, *Edward Lansdale’s Cold War*, 9

Of all the tactics to be carried forward in future U.S. counterinsurgency operations, Lansdale was perhaps the most outspoken advocate of assassination.

Operation Mongoose, the top-secret plan to eliminate Fidel Castro, was also put under Lansdale's direction. "William Harvey, head of Task Force W, the CIA's end of Operation Mongoose" writes Pulitzer Prize winning author Thomas Powers, "[was astonished] on August 13 [1962], when he got an official memo from Edward G. Lansdale, the Kennedy brothers' personal choice to run Mongoose, which explicitly requested Harvey to prepare papers on various anti-Castro programs 'including liquidation of leaders.'"⁹⁶ Lansdale was an influential proponent during this period in the process of normalizing the acceptability of assassination as an unfortunate, but mandatory, aspect of successful counterinsurgency operations. In the 1970s, the reputation of the American intelligence apparatus would be irreparably tarnished by revelations uncovered during the Church, Pike and House Assassination Committees, on the use of assassination as a tool of U.S. diplomacy in both foreign and domestic capacities.⁹⁷

Edward Lansdale was but one of many practitioners of the new school of counterinsurgency. Over time, his stock within the Kennedy administration fell through a combination of distrust and the eventual realization that his ideas were far from original.⁹⁸ Nevertheless, General Lansdale was a "natural pole of attraction for the counterinsurgency dignitaries of allied nations" writes McClintock "and an intermediary through which counterinsurgency innovations were considered and disseminated through the American establishment."⁹⁹ Perhaps more importantly,

⁹⁶ Thomas Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets: Richard Helms & the CIA* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 129.

⁹⁷ See: Kathryn S. Olmsted, *Challenging the Secret Government: The Post-Watergate Investigations of the CIA and FBI* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); John Prados, *The Family Jewels: The CIA, Secrecy, and Presidential Power* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013).

⁹⁸ Lansdale's fall from Kennedy's inner-circle occurred largely because of his unwavering support for close personal friends Diem and Nhu in South Vietnam. Nashel, *Edward Lansdale's Cold War*, 57.

⁹⁹ McClintock, *Instruments of Statecraft*, 201.

at that time, was the fact that widespread American interest and funding drew the talents and knowledge of Lansdale's peers and colleagues from Europe. The ideas and theories of field-tested and hardened counterrevolutionaries such as Robert Thompson and Frank Kitson of Britain, and Roger Trinquier and David Galula of France, would have an immediate impact on the implementation of a constantly developing U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine.

Chapter V

Hidden Figures of U.S. Counterinsurgency Doctrine

During the Kennedy-era, counterinsurgency enthusiasts enjoyed unprecedented attention, funding, and support from the United States government. Taking a page from their communist rivals, counterinsurgency theorists embraced internationalism and collaboration as the only effective means to defeat the Sino-Soviet threat of “war from within.” British counterinsurgency specialist Frank Kitson recalled “at the time there was an immense surge of interest in anti-terrorist operations because of the Vietnam campaign and the emphasis laid by President Kennedy on the study of the subject.” Kitson said “in 1962 I was sent on a six months’ course to the Armed Forces Staff College [in Norfolk, Virginia]” and, as a result, “was invited to give a number of lectures at service establishments outside the college” where, “attendance was not limited to junior officers and once no less than seven generals sat through the performance.”¹⁰⁰

In April 1962, Kitson was recruited to help organize a counterinsurgency symposium held in Washington under the auspices of the Rand corporation. “The basic rationale in undertaking the Symposium” according to mediator Stephen Hosmer, “was that, rather than approach the problems of guerrilla and counterinsurgency warfare theoretically and academically, it might be useful to draw on the knowledge of men of recent and direct experience in counterinsurgency.”¹⁰¹ The symposium brought together the greatest counterinsurgency theorists of the time: Edward Lansdale, Charles Bohannon, Wendell Fertig, and Napoleon Valeriano, optimistic after crushing

¹⁰⁰ Frank Kitson, *Bunch of Five* (London: Faber & Faber, 1977), 200.

¹⁰¹ Stephen T. Hosmer & Sibylle O. Crane, *Counterinsurgency: A Symposium, April 16-20, 1962* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 1963), vii.

the Huk rebellion in the Philippines, were joined by other notables like Kitson, Samuel Wilson, and David Galula of France.

Bohannon, a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army, and Colonel Valeriano, a decorated graduate of the Philippine Military Academy and U.S. Cavalry School, and military assistant to President Magsaysay, had co-authored the well-received *Counter guerrilla Operations: Lessons from the Philippines*.¹⁰² Colonel Wendell Fertig was the Deputy Chief of Psychological War for the United States in the Philippines. Special Forces operative Lieutenant Samuel Wilson had taught guerrilla tactics at Fort Benning; and was director of the U.S. Special Warfare School at Fort Bragg. As Kitson remembered it “President Kennedy asked the Vice President to set up a symposium to study in detail every known aspect of counter-insurgency operations.” Once engaged with his fellow theorists, Kitson found “although we came from such widely divergent backgrounds, it was as if we had all been brought up together from youth. We all spoke the same language.” In Kitson’s mind, the only problem was:

We had another thing in common. Although we had no difficulty in making our views understood to each other, we had mostly been unable to get our respective armies to hoist in the message. Only the Americans seemed to be prepared to spend money and use up men to find the right answer [to counterinsurgency].¹⁰³

Kitson, a highly influential counterrevolutionary, master of psychological warfare, and eventual Commander-in-Chief of the British army, was a pioneer of urban counter-guerrilla warfare. Kitson put a preeminent focus on police and the integral role of their intricate networks of “turned” insurgents. *Gangs and Counter-gangs*, his first work, is believed to be an important

¹⁰² Charles T.R. Bohannon & Napoleon D. Valeriano, *Counter guerrilla Operations: Lessons from the Philippines* (New York: Praeger, 1962).

¹⁰³ Kitson, *Bunch of Five*, 200-1.

foundational premise for the informant and agent provocateur networks used during America's domestic COINTELPRO and MH/CHAOS programs.¹⁰⁴ Kitson's use of "pseudo-gangs," or what would later become known popularly as "death squads," were tested during the Mau Mau insurgency in Kenya:

Kitson established a Special Methods Training Centre with the express purpose of professionalizing the 'turned' insurgents and making them capable and reliable allies in the COIN fight. This Centre...attempted to increase the use of pseudo-gangs by establishing five Special Forces Teams, each consisting of 10 ex-insurgents and commanded by a European – a manifestation of his belief that pseudo-gangs were 'the most effective weapon against the terrorists'...the pseudo-gang technique crystallized the paramilitary nature of police's modus operandi.¹⁰⁵

Compulsory to these tactics was the centrality of Kitson's heightened use of militarized police and their informants and provocateurs, and not the army, in fulfilling the role of the counterinsurgent. The use of pseudo-gangs in counterinsurgency also created an excellent platform for denial of culpability for the imperial directors of the illegal and clandestine activities of "turned" insurgents.

The eventual outgrowth of this strategy, as Kitson displayed in Northern Ireland, was the formal institutionalization of the "death squad" among the NATO allies. During Ireland's "Troubles" of 1969-73, Kitson led "an influential group of army commanders [who] argued in

¹⁰⁴ Frank Kitson, *Gangs and Counter-gangs* (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1960). For an example arguing Kitson influenced U.S. domestic repression, see: Ward Churchill, "The Other Kind: On the Integrity, Consistency, and Humanity of Jalil Abdul Muntaqim" in, Jalil Muntaqim, *Escaping the Prism...Fade to Black* (Montreal: Kersplebedeb, 2015), 195-6. The Black Panther Party was most likely under assault from an FBI-backed pseudo-gang – the Us Organization – in Los Angeles and San Diego. See: Ward Churchill & Jim Vander Wall, *Agents of Repression: The FBI's Secret Wars Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement* (Boston: South End Press, 1988), 48.

¹⁰⁵ Huw Bennett and Andrew Mumford, "Policing in Kenya During the Mau Mau Emergency, 1952-60", in C. Christine Fair and Sumit Ganguly, eds., *Policing Insurgencies: Cops as Counterinsurgents* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 101.

favor of the military security approach.” Kitson and his advocates “denied the popularity of republicanism as a solidarity-building ideology and asserted that the IRA had intimidated the ghettos into acquiescence. They also highlighted the importance of demonstrating a clear determination to prevail.”¹⁰⁶ The end result of this position, writes Ward Churchill, was that:

Kitson created a special “Mobile Reaction Force” within the Special Branch of the Royal Ulster Constabulary to target the IRA. This quickly evolved into...the more sophisticated “E Units” which interfaced not only with British military intelligence, but also MI5 and MI6...as was revealed in the 2006 Barron Report, the “counterterrorists” were themselves terrorists, a prime example being that of a group comprised of E Unit and British military personnel who, together with select recruits from “loyalist” paramilitary organizations, carried out at least 31 assassinations during “The Troubles.”¹⁰⁷

Death squads, called in various global conflicts anything from “Hunter-Killer Teams” to “Provincial Reconnaissance Units”, were an integral component to Kitson’s technique. As anthropologist Jeffrey Sluka notes of the British counterinsurgency in Ireland “from the beginning the Loyalist paramilitaries were closely associated with Kitson’s strategy.”¹⁰⁸

Sluka’s research confirms and reinforces the views expressed by Churchill. In citing an observation by the Clergy of Justice, Sluka reveals that during British counterinsurgency in Northern Ireland:

Different types of pseudo gangs have been identified. We have Kitson’s Military Reconnaissance Force units, made up of SAS personnel or ‘Special Duties Teams,’ trained to carry out SAS style covert operations. There are mixed gangs of security personnel and ‘turned around insurgents.’ There are paramilitary groups carrying out operations inspired by military agents provocateurs

¹⁰⁶ William Beattie Smith, *The British State and the Northern Ireland Crisis, 1969-73: From Violence to Power Sharing* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2011), 153.

¹⁰⁷ Churchill, “The Other Kind”, 255.

¹⁰⁸ Jeffrey A. Sluka, ed., *Death Squad: The Anthropology of State Terror* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 134.

who have penetrated their ranks. And there are paramilitary groups actually controlled by security personnel.¹⁰⁹

Recounting his work with death squads in Kenya, Kitson described a group of trainees who had successfully adapted his approach in infiltrating the insurgency's headquarters:

Once there he would find out as much as possible about the communist District Committee and the insurgent platoon. He would then choose a favourable moment to turn on his hosts and kill as many of them as he could, making sure the leaders did not escape. He and his men...would not only have developed background information into contact information but by acting on it themselves at the most favourable possible moment they would reduce to a minimum the chances of the enemy escaping.¹¹⁰

Beginning with the Kennedy administration's amplified focus on counterinsurgency, the proxy death squad would become a notoriously common refrain of U.S. foreign policy in the decades to come, from Guatemala and Haiti, to Indonesia, Brazil and Vietnam.

Kitson was also an advocate of adapting democratic legal systems to work in tandem with counterinsurgency efforts. He believed "the Law should be used as just another weapon in the government's arsenal" where, in the case of counterinsurgency, "it becomes little more than a propaganda cover for the disposal of unwanted members of the public." To facilitate this effectively "the activities of the legal services have to be tied into the war effort in as discreet a way as possible."¹¹¹ Coincidentally, these types of activities were also popular with Americans like James Jesus Angleton and J. Edgar Hoover; and became synonymous with the FBI's COINTELPRO and CIA's MH/CHAOS programs in the United States.

¹⁰⁹ Sluka, *Death Squad*, 151.

¹¹⁰ Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peace-keeping* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), 125-6. Kitson conducted counterinsurgency operations for the British in Northern Ireland, Kenya, Cyprus, Oman and Malaya.

¹¹¹ Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations*, 69.

In his most highly regarded book, *Low Intensity Operations*, Kitson frequently drew from and directly referenced the theories of his contemporaries and associates. In addition to influencing Kitson, counterinsurgents Sir Robert Thompson of Britain, and Roger Trinquier of France also had a significant impact on American military theorists.

Trinquier, like many French officers, was a loyalist of the fascist Vichy-regime, and gained extensive experience as a counterinsurgent during wars of decolonization in French Indochina and Algeria. Acquiring a notoriety in France comparable to that of Edward Lansdale in America, Trinquier became popularized through fictional portrayals of his character in the film *The Battle of Algiers*, and the novel *The Centurions*.¹¹² He was an international intelligence asset with connections to SDECE (French intelligence), the CIA, and OAS (known as the Secret Army Organization), a terrorist organization composed of fascist French officers gone rogue. OAS, which was behind a wave of domestic bombings and assassinations in France and Algeria, and several coups attempts against Charles de Gaulle, was one of many CIA-protected fascist terrorist groups, or “stay-behind armies” in Cold War Europe.¹¹³ Conspicuously absent from France when de Gaulle purged their ranks, Trinquier avoided jail and execution for his role in the OAS by selling his services as a mercenary to Moïse Tshombe of the Congo.¹¹⁴ In bolstering and training the forces of secession in mineral-rich Katanga province, Trinquier made a significant

¹¹² Bernard B. Fall, “A Portrait of a ‘Centurion’” in, Roger Trinquier, *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency* (London: Praeger, 1964).

¹¹³ Among these secret CIA “stay-behind” armies were: the Colonels of the 1967 fascist coup in Greece; Italy’s fascist terrorist groups Propaganda-Due (P-2) and Ordine Nuovo, of the CIA’s Operation Gladio; and “in Germany, former Waffen SS men were part of the stay-behind formation, as was the Gehlen Organization, a Nazi espionage network reorganized under U.S. auspices after the war by Hitler’s former spy chief Reinhard Gehlen. The Gehlen Organization was financed by the United States and used by NATO to spy on communists in Europe...[Gehlen] later became head of West Germany’s state intelligence agency, the BND, created in 1956.” J. Patrice McSherry, *Predatory States: Operation Condor and Covert War in Latin America* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), 41.

¹¹⁴ Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*, xvii.

contribution to the multifaceted, international effort to eliminate Patrice Lumumba, who was ousted by the CIA's favoured puppet, Joseph Mobutu.¹¹⁵

Trinquier is also credited with coordinating the Hmong of Laos into a clandestine mercenary army of opium traffickers, a trade which he organized personally with Corsican and Binh Xuyen gangsters in Vietnam.¹¹⁶ With the departure of the French and arrival of Americans, the international opium networks and the Hmong army which Trinquier helped to establish were eagerly absorbed by the CIA, to fund their own covert activity in Southeast Asia. In a very direct way, Trinquier is an integral part of the story of criminal CIA-proprietary fronts like Civil Air Transport and Air America - and consequently the detrimental effects of the surge of heroin into urban America and Europe in the 1970s.¹¹⁷ He was in fact a pioneer in the use of the drug trade to fund and propel counterinsurgency, a practice which has since become a standard form of clandestine enrichment during wars in Colombia, Bolivia, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the former Yugoslavia, and countless other nations.

Trinquier's most enduring legacy to counterrevolutionary doctrine were his views on torture. In *Modern Warfare*, which is considered a classic text on counterinsurgency, Trinquier used a twisted logic of combating terror with terror to outline the justifications for the use of torture on those who dissent:

¹¹⁵ David F. Schmitz, "No Acceptable Alternative: Mobutu in the Congo" in, *The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorships, 1965-1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

¹¹⁶ See: Alfred W. McCoy, "French Indochina: Operation X", in *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2003), 131-46. Another version has Trinquier selling directly to Emperor Bao Dai; McCoy's views are based on far more extensive research. David Corn, *Blond Ghost: Ted Shackley and the CIA's Crusades* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1994), 127-8.

¹¹⁷ See, for example: Alexander Cockburn & Jeffrey St. Clair, "The US Opium Wars: China, Burma and the CIA", in *Whiteout: The CIA, Drugs, and the Press* (London: Verso, 1998), 215-32; Peter Dale Scott, "CAT/Air America: 1950-1970", in *The War Conspiracy*, 55-86; McCoy, "Cold War Opium Boom", in *The Politics of Heroin*, 127-92.

No lawyer is present for such an interrogation. If the prisoner gives the information requested, the examination is quickly terminated; if not, specialists must force his secret from him...he must face the suffering, and perhaps death, he has heretofore managed to avoid. The terrorist must accept this as a condition inherent in his trade and in the methods of warfare that, with full knowledge, his superiors have chosen.¹¹⁸

Abduction, detention, interrogation, and torture came to be key weaponry in the arsenal of the counterinsurgent. In the mind of Trinquier, and inline with the modernists, the technological society achieved in the Western world would somehow remove the barbarism from torture:

Interrogation in *modern warfare* should be conducted by specialists perfectly versed in the techniques to be employed...the interrogators must always strive not to injure the physical and mental integrity of individuals. Science can easily place at the army's disposition the means for obtaining what is sought.¹¹⁹

Trinquier further lamented the choice "to refuse interrogation specialists the right to seize the truly guilty terrorist and spare the innocent."¹²⁰ The question is, how would one know if someone was guilty or innocent until interrogation? In this scenario, all civilians are potential subjects of an institutionalized regime of torture.

This mentality was akin to policies being formulated by the Kennedy administration and the Special Group on Counterinsurgency. The adoption of these philosophies by American military and intelligence institutions was reflected in the CIA's *Kubark Counterintelligence Interrogation* manual of July 1963. Implemented two years after Trinquier's highly acclaimed *Modern Warfare* was originally published, the Kubark manual used the same logic and language:

¹¹⁸ Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*, 21-2.

¹¹⁹ Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*, 23.

¹²⁰ Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*, *ibid.*

The Interrogator needs all the help he can get. And a principle source of aid today is scientific findings. The intelligence service which is able to bring pertinent, modern knowledge to bear upon its problems enjoys huge advantages over a service which conducts its clandestine business in eighteenth century fashion.¹²¹

For the CIA, in the modern form of torture “coercive procedures are designed not only to exploit the resistant source’s internal conflicts and induce him to wrestle with himself but also to bring a superior outside force to bear upon the subject’s resistance.”¹²² This mentality, as much Camelot as it was French fascist, was dictated by an arrogance which justified the barbarity of torture and repression, and the trauma of invasion and conquest, through a religious adherence to the modern scientific methods of western society.

Beyond his obvious hypocrisy, like all members of this school of counterinsurgency, Trinquier did not believe people in Third World countries had a right to resist the domination of their foreign occupiers. Western state terror, dispensed liberally and with shocking regularity, was rationalized as a natural reaction to the ignorance of primitive people. The condescending and distrustful outlook which governed Trinquier’s theories of the insurgent also caused him to develop an intricate system of surveillance during the war in Algeria. This would, of course, feed the French psychological warfare system of interrogation and torture. As colleague General Paul Aussaresses recounted, Trinquier “noticed that when Napoleon proceeded to administer the cities he had just captured in the Rhine valley, he began by numbering each house and counting and identifying its inhabitants. Trinquier used the same method in Algiers.” In turn, this allowed Aussaresses “to draw up lists of suspects and to proceed with massive arrests. Interrogations of

¹²¹ Central Intelligence Agency, *Kubark Counterintelligence Interrogation, July 1963* (Washington: National Security Archive/CIA Training Manuals, 1963), 2.

¹²² CIA, *Kubark Counterintelligence Interrogation*, 82.

suspects led us to new names and with my files growing through sources mainly provided by Colonel Roger Trinquier, whose personal passion for the history of Napoleon's saga was to be extremely helpful in his new mission.”¹²³

While there is no doubting Roger Trinquier's impact on America's new counterinsurgency doctrine, Sir Robert Thompson of Britain was as important in the formulation of Kennedy-era counterinsurgency initiatives. Like Trinquier, Thompson created modern systems of census, surveillance, and population control. Thompson, an indelible veteran of British counterinsurgency efforts in Malaya, was instrumental in the development of the American “Strategic Hamlet” program in South Vietnam, a cornerstone of Camelot's experimentation in Southeast Asia.¹²⁴ Like Frank Kitson, Thompson was also a strong advocate of police as the frontline force of any anti-subversive program. Douglas Blaufarb, CIA Chief of Station for Laos, observed “most theorists of counterinsurgency view the police as a critical suppression arm, and some, such as Sir Robert Thompson, believe that it rather than the military should be the principle reliance of suppression activities.”¹²⁵

Thompson's experience in implementing “New Villages” during British pacification efforts in Malaya would gain the attention and direct personal interest of President Kennedy.¹²⁶ Historian Michael Latham recounts that William Colby, CIA Chief of Station in Saigon, encouraged South Vietnamese leaders “Diem and Nhu to step up their own strategic, village-level efforts and also advised them to meet with Robert G.K. Thompson.” After their meeting, and apparently “attracted

¹²³ General Paul Aussaresses, *The Battle of the Casbah: Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism in Algeria 1955-1957* (New York: Enigma Books, 2002), 92-3.

¹²⁴ See: Sir Robert Thompson, “Strategic Hamlets”, in *Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam* (New York: Praeger, 1966), 121-40.

¹²⁵ Douglas S. Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era: U.S. Doctrine and Performance, 1950 to the Present* (New York: The Free Press, 1977), 194.

¹²⁶ A memorandum to McGeorge Bundy references visits by Thompson to Washington and meetings with Kennedy in early 1962 and spring 1963. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 238.

to Thompson's ideas, Diem and Nhu became increasingly interested in combining military operations with a nationwide program of 'strategic hamlets.'"¹²⁷

For Thompson, the purpose of the Strategic Hamlet was not one of relocation and protection of the civilian population. Quite the opposite, Thompson advocated for instrumentalizing civilians and drawing them directly into war. "I think it is a mistake to establish strong points, particularly concrete posts, outside the perimeter of strategic hamlets," Thompson commented insightfully, "psychologically this allows the Viet Cong to attack the armed defenders without attacking the hamlet or involving the people in any way in battle."¹²⁸ In repudiating the "one criticism frequently levelled at the strategic-hamlet concept by military officers – that it is defensive", Thompson assured:

The concept as a whole is designed to secure a firm base and then to expand from that into disputed, and finally enemy-controlled territory...it becomes an offensive advance which will wrest the military initiative from the insurgent. This is far more aggressive, because it is effective, than launching thousands of operations with hundreds of troops in each, all wading through the paddy fields with their rifles cocked to no purpose.¹²⁹

Here, it is clear Thompson sees civilians as pawns and hostages to the imperial agenda, to be used as human shields against the insurgency. It is also apparent that Thompson recognizes the apprehension of the revolutionary to directly involve or harm civilians in combat; yet for Thompson, using non-combatants in this manner psychologically drains the insurgency and causes inevitable contradictions in the rebellion. In this scenario, the population is forced by extreme violence to join the counterinsurgents.

¹²⁷ Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 173.

¹²⁸ Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency*, 131.

¹²⁹ Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency*, 126.

The Strategic Hamlet program, with eventual direction from U.S. pacification chief (CORDS) and Special Group (C.I.) member Bob “Blowtorch” Komer, was an unmitigated disaster for all participants.¹³⁰ Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) and USAID Agency for International Development (USAID) officer John Paul Vann found “his experience with the Strategic Hamlet Program in 1962 and 1963 had taught him that forced relocation was a cruel folly.”¹³¹ After all, the Strategic Hamlet program never purported any semblance of a permanent solution. It was instead a transitional space for forcibly dispossessed Vietnamese refugees to be psychologically broken down and reconditioned to their fate in a modern urban setting.

The speculative and exploratory nature of JFK’s counterinsurgency was bound to produce human catastrophes. As historian Gabriel Kolko commented of Kennedy and his advisers “one can make too much of their hubris, but in the milieu where ideas counted for much it remains a fact that their self-confidence was a spur to experimentation unlike any known in the period until then.”¹³² Of course, Kennedy’s Special Group was drawing direct inspiration from men like Lansdale, Kitson, Thompson and Trinquier, who were at best the closest thing to intellectual mercenaries. The ensuing result of this marriage-of-minds translated into the dispossession, terrorization, and annihilation of millions of people in the so-called Third World.

¹³⁰ “The Kennedy...policy of helping the South Vietnamese fight the communists through economic and military assistance had not worked...the overall pacification effort, notably the strategic hamlet program and its lackluster successors, had failed to stem the insurgency.” Richard A. Hunt, *Pacification: The American Struggle for Vietnam’s Hearts and Minds* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 30.

¹³¹ Neil Sheehan, *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 1988), 540. Or for the perspective of Vann’s Vietnamese counterpart and liaison, see: Tran Ngoc Chau, *Vietnam Labyrinth: Allies, Enemies, & Why the U.S. Lost the War* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2012).

¹³² Kolko, *Confronting the Third World*, 128.

David Galula, the French officer who would eventually become the most highly regarded of all counterinsurgency theorists, once quipped, “better a bad plan than no plan at all.” In a very real sense, Galula saw Third World suffering as a necessary sacrificial lamb for development: “the best way to assess a plan is to test it in the field. Its imperfections will then appear. It is only thereafter, when the plan has been revised, that one has the right to apply it everywhere.”¹³³ A deeply cynical attitude pervades this approach. Galula had an awareness of “the enormous psychological superiority of the rebels”¹³⁴ but insisted “a counterinsurgency is never lost *a priori* because of a supposedly unpopular regime,” due to the fact:

As the war lasts, the war itself becomes the central issue and the ideological advantage of the insurgent decreases considerably. The population’s attitude is dictated not by the intrinsic merits of the contending causes, but by the answer to these two simple questions: Which side is going to win? Which side threatens the most, and which offers the most protection?¹³⁵

For Galula, the testing phase for strategy, which appears from his writings to be a permanent state for the counterinsurgent, is marked by the procedural distrust of civilians and the use of violence to sway their opinion in favour of counterrevolution. According to Galula:

The battle happens because the population, which was until recently under the insurgent’s open control and probably still is under his hidden control through existing political cells, cannot cooperate spontaneously even if there is every reason to believe that a majority is sympathetic to the counterinsurgent. The inhabitants will usually avoid contact with him. There is a barrier between them and the counterinsurgent that has to be broken and can be broken only by force. Whatever the counterinsurgent wants the population to do will have to be imposed.¹³⁶

¹³³ David Galula, *Pacification in Algeria, 1956-1958* (Arlington: RAND Corporation, 1963), 298.

¹³⁴ Galula, *Pacification in Algeria*, 244.

¹³⁵ Galula, *Pacification in Algeria*, 246-7.

¹³⁶ David Galula, *Counter-Insurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York: Praeger, 1964), 116.

In many ways, Kennedy's modernization theorists and Galula had a compatible vision. Historian Michael McClintock describes the counterinsurgency doctrine of the Kennedy administration as "assign[ing] little importance to the sociopolitical forces driving a people to insurrection", and where "in practice, the purely military tactics of counterinsurgency overshadowed the United States' myriad programs of economic development." Accordingly, McClintock adds "the net result was an assortment of military tactics largely divorced from the political context of the insurgency, with many of them prohibited by rules of war."¹³⁷

Like fellow French officer Roger Trinquier, Galula insisted upon a well-developed regime of surveillance, mass interrogation, and torture. "Control of the population begins obviously with a thorough census. Every inhabitant must be registered and given a foolproof identity card." For Galula, "a census, if properly made and exploited, is a basic source of intelligence." Within Galula's system of containment, we witness the anti-civilian priorities of the counterinsurgent, as the census "would show, for instance, who is related to whom, an important piece of information in counterinsurgency warfare because insurgent recruiting at the village level is generally based initially on family ties."¹³⁸ In Algeria, the census was not a benevolent tool of government used to assist the civilian population; for Galula, Trinquier, and the French, the census was a method of psychological terror and social control.

Galula, while relatively unknown in France, had, and continues to have, a wide audience among United States military and intelligence circles. His manifesto, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, was written while on fellowship at Harvard's Center for International Affairs in the early 1960s. At that time, Henry Kissinger, National Security Adviser for Richard Nixon, was a research supervisor at the Center for International Affairs. Galula was

¹³⁷ McClintock, *Instruments of Statecraft*, 283.

¹³⁸ Galula, *Counter-Insurgency Warfare*, 116-7.

undoubtedly influenced by, and had an influence upon, his American benefactors. There is an undeniable synchronicity between Galula's theories and those of Kennedy's advocates of modernization. In fact, American advocates of counterinsurgency since the Vietnam War have followed Galula religiously. In 2007, Lieutenant Colonel John Nagl emphasized in his forward to the US Counterinsurgency Manual, "of the many books that were influential in the writing of the Field Manual 3-24, perhaps none was as important as David Galula's *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*."¹³⁹

¹³⁹ Galula continues to influence the architects of U.S. global hegemony; it is well known that his works found an audience with the Bush administration during the wars in Iraq, see his mark in: US Army and Marine Corps, *Counterinsurgency Field Manual: US Army Field Manual No.3-24: Marine Corps Warfighting Publication No. 3-33.5* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), xix.

Chapter VI

Modernization as Counterinsurgency

Modernization theory as counterinsurgency required that movements for agrarian land reform, the central cause behind most uprisings in the Third World, be harshly and resolutely eliminated and replaced with forcible, violent, dislocation of civilian populations into urban areas. Peasant farmers and communal lands, of course, did not coincide properly with the goals of either modernization theory or the American corporations for whom it was designed. Citizens in this context were viewed as subversives.

Forever finding the profit margin, and in accordance with the principles of the modernization theorists, American chemical companies like Monsanto and Dow capitalized on the act of dispossession itself - as Operation Ranch Hand sprayed deadly, cancerous, dioxin-based herbicides over Southeast Asia. This was often just a prelude to what became known as “carpet-bombing”. Faced with deadly assault from the sky, millions in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, chose to abandon their ancestral lands. As historian Peter Sills points out, it wasn’t just the communist guerrillas, but the entire population which was affected:

Ranch Hand was not supposed to spray “friendly” or neutral villages. But this was a war fought without boundaries; there was no strict dividing line between enemy and allied territory, and approval was routinely given to defoliate populated areas without really knowing who lived there. Many defoliation missions sprayed “the area in the vicinity of” or “surrounding” or “living close to” a certain village where VC troops were thought to be stationed.¹⁴⁰

Dow Chemical saw profits of 35 percent on sales of Agent Orange to the U.S. military for use in their war in Vietnam, yet still complained in a memo to the government “it could have gotten at

¹⁴⁰ Peter Sills, *Toxic War: The Story of Agent Orange* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2014), 86.

least 10 percent more selling these compounds commercially.”¹⁴¹ In the transition to modernization, capitalism had, to use the words of Walt Rostow “left no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous ‘cash payment.’”¹⁴²

The requisite urbanization inherent to the process of modernization was facilitated by some of the most horrific and inhumane actions of the 20th century. Nang, a peasant woman from Laos, described her experience with the process of modernization in the 1960s:

Xieng Khouang has been my family’s home since the time of my ancestors. But now it has been my lot to come to Vientiane province, the capital of Laos...there was danger as the war came closer [to Xieng Khouang], like the sound of bombs or shells or the airplanes which constantly made a terrible noise in the sky and led me to be terribly, terribly afraid of dying. At that time, our lives became like those of animals desperately trying to escape their hunters...we didn’t know how long we would stay alive. When looking at the faces of my children who were losing the so very precious happiness of childhood, as each and every day we would seek escape somewhere in the forest, I would grow increasingly miserable because of the war and hate it more and more.¹⁴³

In neighbouring South Vietnam, economist Don Ronk wrote of the profound impact of the American campaign to bomb people into modernity, as “the peasant population (some 80% of the total) under the real and potential threat of death from the sky began trekking into the cities” and where “those who won’t move even under this threat can be force-moved. Thus the areas of bombardment crept across the Vietnamese countryside driving the population before them into the cities...the rush on the urban areas became a stampede of humans.” The result, in Ronk’s analysis, was that “architects of ‘special warfare’ in Vietnam got exactly what they asked for, the removal of the peasantry from much of the countryside. Everyone left ‘out there’ then is a rebel

¹⁴¹ Sills, *Toxic War*, 81.

¹⁴² Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth*, 149.

¹⁴³ Fred Branfman, ed., *Voices from the Plains of Jar: Life Under Air War* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 41-3.

or ‘aggressor’” to the U.S. military. In turn, this informed and rationalized the genocidal strategy of “free-fire zones” and “kill counts,” a situation where American soldiers were instructed to view “any movement or sign of life in a free strike zone [as] ‘fair game.’”¹⁴⁴

The American attack on the civilians of Southeast Asia during the 1960s and 1970s was protracted, systematic, and unrelenting. In his book *A Bright and Shining Lie*, Neil Sheehan wrote “the first Vietnamese peasant homes to be burned by U.S. troops were put to the torch by the Marines in several hamlets near Da Nang on August 3, 1965. Morley Safer of CBS filmed the burnings and shocked millions of Americans who watched the network’s evening news.” A year later “‘Zippo jobs’ on Vietnamese hamlets by American soldiers had become so common that television audiences in the United States were no longer scandalized by them.”¹⁴⁵

Indeed, the American public became desensitized to the sociopathic personalities of their nation’s counterrevolutionary vanguard. Professor James Tyner states that “for men such as Kennedy and Rostow, McNamara and Nixon, Westmoreland and Komer, the annihilation of people through ‘attrition,’ or the regulation of people through environmental destruction, were seen as ‘just’ practices.” Adding to this perspective, Tyner forces meditation on the “insane logic” of these counterinsurgency practitioners:

We see in Vietnam a panoply of spatial strategies – aerial bombardment and cluster bombs, chemical defoliants and ecowarfare, confinement and enclosure – that were used to subjugate the Vietnamese population. We see also the downward spiral of policy pronouncements, the increased willingness to subject “other” bodies to more and more violence. We see...the “insane logic” that condoned the repeated attempts to annihilate people, their livelihoods, and their homes.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Don Ronk, “How Not to Keep Them Down on the Farm” in, Barry Weisberg, ed., *Ecocide in Indochina: The Ecology of War* (San Francisco: Canfield Press, 1970), 160.

¹⁴⁵ Sheehan, *A Bright Shining Lie*, 589.

¹⁴⁶ James A. Tyner, “Biopower in Vietnam”, in *War, Violence, and Population: Making the Body Count* (New York: Guilford Press, 2009), 108.

Over time, the engineers and inheritors of Camelot's counterinsurgency doctrine displayed an unrestrained willingness to put into practice anything they put their minds to, no matter how depraved or inhumane. These measures included carpet-bombing civilians to shape behaviour; defoliating pristine tropical biospheres to intentionally create an unlivable, toxic environment; and field-testing an array of insidiously brutal new weapons with clear civilian applications, like daisy-cutters, cluster-bombs, flechette bombs and napalm.

The vast arsenal of weaponry designed for experimentation and use in Southeast Asia best illustrates the core anti-civilian principles of American counterinsurgency warfare. In Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, ordnance dropped from above was meant to cause maximum damage, with no consideration given to the destruction of the environment or the murder of civilian populations. If anything, the weapons deployed by the United States during their wars in Southeast Asia were specifically designed to cause widespread ecological devastation and the annihilation of non-combatant populations. In 1971, the "Air War Study Group" at Cornell University described the advantages of the cluster-bomb as a weapon of war, with advanced applications suited to counterinsurgent, anti-civilian, warfare:

Single, large bombs do not achieve a uniform coverage over large areas...the cluster-bomb unit...solves the problem by packaging many smaller bomblets in a single container. The casing is blown open (by compressed gas) above ground level (typically 500-foot altitude), distributing the bomblets over an area several hundred feet on a side. The CBU-24 [cluster-bomb] contains about 600 bomblets, each of which...carries in its casing some 300 steel pellets – which become the effective weapons (180,000 projectiles in all)...the CBU is essentially an area weapon and does not need to be delivered with great accuracy.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁷ Raphael Littauer & Norman Uphoff, eds., *The Air War in Indochina* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), 222.

The widespread adoption and habitual use of cluster-bombs as a weapon of war in Vietnam indicates the Pentagon paid little attention to specifically targeting insurgents. Instead, the opposite appears true, where the end goal was decimating whatever got in the way of American firepower. This strategy can be attributed directly to the original philosophy of the Kennedy administration and his Special Group, who, inspired by Mao, believed that the guerrilla “fish” could be defeated if the peasant “sea” in which they swam were drained.¹⁴⁸

Another weapon which caused immense suffering for Vietnamese non-combatants was the “daisy cutter,” a bomb which the Cornell group said “is intended to work mostly by blast effect. It is delivered from slow-flying cargo planes by parachute” exploding, like the cluster-bomb, just above ground level. “The intensive blast zone is about 300 feet in diameter, clearing trees and other obstructions (instant helicopter landing zone).”¹⁴⁹ The flechette bomb, which upon detonation sprayed thousands of steel, razor-like “flechettes” engineered to maim and butcher, was “redesigned to contain sharp shreds of plastic, undetectable by X-rays.”¹⁵⁰ As for napalm, an incendiary “gasoline jellied by mixing it with a soap powder,” was observed by the Cornell group to be “sticky and cannot be readily removed from surfaces against which it has been splattered; attempts to brush it off result in further spreading.” The Cornell study also noted “a canister of napalm achieves excellent area coverage. Napalm is extremely effective as an antipersonnel weapon. It inflicts deep burns which, if not fatal, heal slowly and leave characteristic disfigurement.”¹⁵¹ In this scenario, the pain inflicted by physical violence is matched only by the psychological terror caused by such menacing weapons. The regular and

¹⁴⁸ “Kennedy was particularly taken by Mao’s famous aphorism that ‘Guerrillas are like fish, and the people are the water they swim in.’” Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 21.

¹⁴⁹ Littauer & Uphoff, *The Air War in Indochina*, 223.

¹⁵⁰ Sills, *Toxic War*, 76.

¹⁵¹ Littauer & Uphoff, *The Air War in Indochina*, 222.

extensive use of cluster bombs, daisy cutters, flechette bombs, and napalm by the United States in Southeast Asia clearly demonstrates the nature of American counterinsurgency as a doctrine which, historically, explicitly, and purposely targets civilians.

In their assessment of November 1971, the Cornell University Air War Study Group identified American counterinsurgency as a strategy of attrition aimed primarily at non-combatant populations. Invoking World War II, the Cornell group recounted:

In the air war against Japan when the U.S. forces had complete control of the air and could have been highly selective, 80 percent of the high-explosive and fire bombs dropped by B-29s were directed against urban areas, with devastating effect on the populations of Tokyo and other central cities. The two nuclear bombs were dropped on cities at least one of which (Nagasaki) was of such limited economic and military significance that previously it had remained virtually unscathed.¹⁵²

Taking note of the continued emphasis on bombing missions in “subsequent major conflicts” in “Korea and in Indochina,” the Cornell group found that “particularly in counterinsurgency warfare, such strategic missions tend to be lacking in discrimination and to be directed against civilian populations and the structure of society at large.” Additionally, “in counterinsurgency operations...targets are small and generally elusive, and most are highly mobile. Specific strikes on such targets are usually beyond the technical capabilities of air warfare; the category of strategic targets is then broadened to justify the more indiscriminate patterns of bombing.” In the end, “shattering the enemy’s morale and breaking his will to resist become military objectives, and damage or terror against civilians within enemy territory, whether intentional or not, is considered acceptable.”¹⁵³

¹⁵² Littauer & Uphoff, *The Air War in Indochina*, 162.

¹⁵³ Littauer & Uphoff, *The Air War in Indochina*, *ibid.*

Questioning whether the American intervention in Vietnam constituted genocide, French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre asked “can we say that the armed forces of the United States are killing Vietnamese in Vietnam for the simple reason that they are Vietnamese?”¹⁵⁴ Sartre proposed that the United States targeted the Vietnamese people as a whole because “since it was the unity of an entire people which held the conventional army at bay, the only anti-guerrilla strategy which could work was the destruction of this people, in other words, of civilians, of women and children.”¹⁵⁵ The logic governing these actions was dispensed by Americans who:

Want to show others that guerrilla war does not pay: they want to show all the oppressed and exploited nations that might be tempted to shake off the American yoke by launching a people’s war, at first against their own pseudo-governments, the compradors of the army, then against the U.S. “Special Forces,” and finally against the GIs. In short, they want to show Latin America first of all, and more generally, all of the Third World.¹⁵⁶

Sartre, in an ominous but truthful admission, concluded his thoughts on the subject by stating “the group which the United States wants to intimidate and terrorize by way of the Vietnamese nation is the human group in its entirety.”¹⁵⁷

John F. Kennedy immediately focused on Latin America and Southeast Asia as laboratories for testing the effectiveness of American counterinsurgency doctrine. Intervention into the internal affairs of Laos, South Vietnam and Thailand was guided by JFK’s initial Special Group memorandum - these countries became theaters for countersubversion as “critical areas initially assigned to the Special Group (C.I.)” in President Kennedy’s January 1962 NSAM 124.¹⁵⁸ The legacy of JFK’s counterinsurgency was not shaped by a desire for American withdrawal from

¹⁵⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre, “On Genocide” in, *Ecocide in Indochina*, 33.

¹⁵⁵ Sartre, “On Genocide”, 37.

¹⁵⁶ Sartre, “On Genocide”, 39.

¹⁵⁷ Sartre, “On Genocide”, 45.

¹⁵⁸ Gravel, *The Pentagon Papers*, 661.

Southeast Asia, despite the notorious NSAM 263; it resulted in a long-term commitment to covert, undeclared war, genocidal practices of mass relocation, and a perpetual state of anti-subversive psychological warfare.¹⁵⁹ We must remember that for Kennedy, Laos was as important, in a geostrategic sense, as South Vietnam. In 1963 the secret war in Laos was still a secret, in fact, it was Laos that defined the desired projection of American power through clandestine activity under Kennedy. JFK's commitment to irregular warfare in Southeast Asia provided the foundation for all that followed during the Johnson and Nixon administrations.

Kennedy's counterinsurgency policy, while exceptional, was neither new nor especially unique. Counterinsurgency became a heightened priority under Kennedy, and it acquired official institutional recognition through the lobbying efforts of the modernization theorists. However, counterinsurgency was a tradition long-ingrained in American military practice. From Andrew Jackson to William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt, American presidents had a long history of endorsing counterinsurgency warfare as the central weapon of conquest. President Kennedy was no different.

Unfortunately, for millions of civilians in Southeast Asia and Latin America, their lives and their communities would be violently and traumatically turned upside-down by the trial-and-error whims of detached and clinical policymakers in Washington. With Kennedy as president, in both words and actions, the so-called Third World became more and more a laboratory for the preferred tool in the arsenal of this newly packaged and marketed form of American-style imperialism. That tool was counterinsurgency warfare.

¹⁵⁹ Crafted in October 1963, NSAM 263 described the implementation of American withdrawal of 1,000 military advisers from South Vietnam. Many historians falsely interpret this as Kennedy's long-term commitment to de-escalation in Southeast Asia. See: Peter Dale Scott, *Deep Politics and the Death of JFK* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 24-30, 32-7; John M. Newman. *JFK and Vietnam: Deception, Intrigue, and the Struggle for Power* (New York: Warner Books, 1992), 407-11.

This section has focused on the history of American counterinsurgency, and how the Kennedy administration functioned in developing and advancing this strategy. The following section will investigate the operational arm of U.S. counterinsurgency policy implementation. While Green Berets and Special Forces are often associated with this role, in truth, militarized political police have always been the key implementors of American counterinsurgency “on the ground.”

Part II

America's Praetorian Guard – The Rise of Militarized Political Police

Chapter VII

Historical Role of Police and Prisons in the United States

There is a tendency among historians to trace the origins of organized police in the United States to the establishment of the New York City Police Department in 1845. As author Marilyn Johnson describes it:

A growing metropolitan economy had attracted new immigrants, spurred the development of poor tenement districts, and fueled class and ethnic tensions that produced a wave of urban disorder in the 1830s and 1840s. Poor neighborhoods such as the predominantly Irish Five Points were plagued by high rates of property crime, violence, vice, and a series of street riots that convinced city officials to create a full-time professional police force along the lines of London's Metropolitan Police.¹⁶⁰

While there is nothing necessarily false in Johnson's description, there is also legitimate contention that formalized policing in the United States began at a much earlier date. Other historians, finding the New York City analysis too rigid, see police foundations in the advent of South Carolina's slave codes of 1712.

The original police patrols in South Carolina were based on the "Barbados patrols" who "were ordered out whenever the government suspected plotting" such as when "militia patrols responded to and helped suppress the 1686 rebellion in which slaves and Irish servants conspired

¹⁶⁰ Marilyn S. Johnson, *Street Justice: A History of Police Violence in New York City* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003), 14.

together.” According to historian Sally Hadden, the rise of slave patrols in Barbados resulted in the creation of “a formal military structure,” which, by the late 1640s, “included all able-bodied adult white males, indentured servants, and even free blacks.”¹⁶¹ The transfer of these practices to the Carolinas occurred when “a group of Barbadian colonists...established themselves in South Carolina in 1670” and subsequently, “by the following year, Barbadians constituted nearly half of South Carolina’s population.” Hadden adds “during the colony’s first twenty years, few laws restricted slave behavior, primarily because there were not many slaves in obvious need of restraint.” Barbadian-style slave patrols were temporarily held in-check because “blacks did not outnumber whites until 1708.”¹⁶²

With a relatively small population of slaves, the Barbadians of South Carolina did not formally adopt slave patrols until the early 18th century, when, according to historian H.M. Henry “the number of slaves increased so rapidly” that “a more comprehensive policy had to be sought.”¹⁶³ Professor Henry charts the course of a “system of indentured servitude” which provided “the germ idea of the laws of slave control.” A more aggressive approach prevailed when “the regulations which were sufficient for a small number of white servants, indented for a limited period of time, were found to be quite inadequate for the large number of blacks owned absolutely by the white man.” Henry claimed, “here the differentiation seems to have begun” whereas “a few acts were passed before 1712” it was “that year that the first elaborate law for the control of the slaves was enacted.”¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ Sally E. Hadden, *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 13.

¹⁶² Hadden, *Slave Patrols*, 14.

¹⁶³ H.M. Henry, *The Police Control of the Slave in South Carolina* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1914), 5.

¹⁶⁴ Henry, *The Police Control of the Slave in South Carolina*, 5-6.

The initial growth of the slave patrols in South Carolina was propelled by fear of slave insurrection and of a wider insurgency against the planter-class. In her study of the slave patrols, professor Hadden illustrates the inner-dynamics of this sentiment:

In the late seventeenth century, South Carolina's location made slave control even more important than it would be in Virginia and North Carolina. Slaves in South Carolina were close to both the Spanish in Florida and the Native American settlements; the relative proximity of both groups meant that blacks were more likely to run away or seize the opportunity for rebellion.¹⁶⁵

The loose restrictions on slaves that governed early South Carolinian settlement were quickly replaced by a militarized police force tasked, in theory, with defeating insurrection when it arose. However, the slave patrols quickly became the primary operating tool within a larger architecture of social control. The police patrols developed and relied heavily upon counterinsurgency strategies based on psychological warfare and terrorism. In their historical survey of the police in America, the Center for Research on Criminal Justice reported that:

The plantation slave patrols, often consisting of three armed men on horseback...were charged with maintaining discipline, catching runaway slaves and preventing slave insurrection. In pursuing this duty, they routinely invaded slave quarters and whipped and terrorized Blacks...they also helped enforce the laws against slave literacy, trade and gambling.¹⁶⁶

In addition to terrorizing African slaves, the patrol system enabled the growth of a more refined infrastructure of spatial surveillance and countersubversion. Henry records that in South Carolina "the police patrol came to be a part of the military. The act of 1721 merged the patrol service definitely into the militia organization, making it a part of the military system, and

¹⁶⁵ Hadden, *Slave Patrols*, 15.

¹⁶⁶ Center for Research on Criminal Justice, *The Iron Fist and the Velvet Glove: An Analysis of the U.S. Police* (Berkeley: Center for Research on Criminal Justice, 1977), 20.

devolving upon the military authority its arrangement and maintenance.”¹⁶⁷ As professor Hadden describes, South Carolina was a place where “whites and blacks in the port of Charleston were under surveillance from the town’s inception.”¹⁶⁸

Perceived by the planter-class as a necessary innovation, soon, other slave-states would adopt patrols based on the policing model of South Carolina. In Louisiana, “believing that prevention was the greatest protection against servile violence, Louisiana lawmakers desired an early warning system to identify revolts that were in their formative stage.” In his dissertation on slave revolts in Louisiana, historian Junius Rodriguez states:

Therefore, besides expanding the state’s militia, officials also developed an internal patrol network for preventing slave plots before they ever arose. Police Juries within the respective parishes received authorization to establish patrols and individual policies for guarding the plantation districts against any form of slave unrest. Members of patrols had the right to visit any plantation and investigate all slave cabins for suspicious activities.¹⁶⁹

In Louisiana, as in South Carolina, “in rural communities all across the state young men aged sixteen and upwards trained at militia musters with uneasy anticipation of the events that might require their services.”¹⁷⁰ The wealthy, for the most part, avoided service. The slave patrol system and the higher title of overseer was used by the plantation owners as a divisive strategy designed to elevate slightly the social status of those descended from the indentured servant class. Poor, landless whites, who may otherwise have had sympathy for the African slave, would be required to purge lingering memories of their own relative subjugation. Now bound by the

¹⁶⁷ Henry, *The Police Control of the Slave in South Carolina*, 32.

¹⁶⁸ Hadden, *Slave Patrols*, 16.

¹⁶⁹ Junius Peter Rodriguez Jr., *Ripe for Revolt: Louisiana and the Tradition of Slave Insurrection, 1803-1865* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1992), 157-8.

¹⁷⁰ Rodriguez, *Ripe for Revolt*, 162.

overseer's mandate of suspicion and aggression toward all Africans, slave patrols were the barrier between master and slave.

To understand the contradiction between poor whites and African slaves in the South, we "have to look at the overseer as he is related to the master above and the slaves below." Professor H.M. Henry describes the men who made up the slave patrols as coming "from among the non-slaveholding, non-propertied class of whites who at least sometimes may have been distrustful if not jealous of the slaveholder." Henry adds that "overseeing was a step to nothing. The overseer was not often received in the home of the master and certainly not as an equal." As a manager in the slave bureaucracy, the overseer developed "a sense he, like the slave he controlled, found no hope or ambition in the system."¹⁷¹ The analysis of the Center for Research on Criminal Justice concurs, stating that the poor, landless overseers of the plantation slave patrols:

Hated the planters, who controlled the best land and access to markets, almost as much as the slaves...policing, then, in its earliest years, developed as a planter-class strategy of race and class control, designed both to keep Black slaves in subjugation and to exacerbate the contradictions between Black slaves and poor Whites.¹⁷²

In truth, for the elite class who owned the land, and who had recently turned poor Whites against enslaved Africans, "the function of patrols in preventing insurrections from developing," as Rodriguez describes it, was based mainly upon their "ability to ban the liberating idea of freedom from the slave's mind."¹⁷³ From the outset, through a successful prioritization of psychological warfare and tactics of terror, the slave patrols of the American South were transformed into a formidable counterinsurgency asset.

¹⁷¹ Henry, *The Police Control of the Slave in South Carolina*, 22.

¹⁷² CRCJ, *The Iron Fist and the Velvet Glove*, 21.

¹⁷³ Rodriguez, *Ripe for Revolt*, 159.

The fear of slave uprisings on the plantations of the South was not the only source of worry for the colonial elite during this period. Insurrections in the northern cities also provided an impetus for those with power to secure a permanent police force. The northern cities did not have the slave patrol; but soldiers and local militia, which in many instances were simply glorified lynch mobs, often fulfilled a policing role. Mob justice, as practiced during the New York conspiracy trials of 1741, was swift and brutal. Historian Howard Zinn wrote of the 1741 rebellion plot, where, he recounts, “when mysterious fires broke out, blacks and whites were accused of conspiring together.” A paranoid climate prevailed, as stories of South Carolina’s Stono River insurrection of 1739 had a lasting influence on public perception. “After a trial full of lurid accusations by informers, and forced confessions,” continues Zinn, “two white men and two white women were executed, eighteen slaves were hanged, and thirteen slaves were burned alive.”¹⁷⁴

According to professor Andy Doolen, who paints a similar portrait of the affair, the persecutions of the New York conspiracy trials of 1741 were based on scant evidence. The trials were motivated, more so, by an atmosphere of counterinsurgency based on fears of class warfare. “In mid-eighteenth-century New York, everyday acts of slave resistance happened along Manhattan’s wharfs,” writes Doolen, “many slaves labored alongside soldiers and Irish laborers.” Distrust of the “dangerous classes” was growing, as the dockyards in New York were:

Notorious for criminal activity, the waterfront was also a place of interracial and international exchange, since African, Irish, English, West Indian, and Dutch met in taverns to drink drams of rum, fraternize, gamble, and fence stolen goods. Not surprisingly, public officials first interpreted the fires of 1741 as the deeds of a conspiracy of criminals whose only aim was to steal from the rich.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Howard Zinn, *A People’s History of the United States* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003), 37.

¹⁷⁵ Andy Doolen, *Fugitive Empire: Locating Early American Imperialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 15.

Seizing the opportunity presented by the unknown arsonists to attack the lower-classes, “city officials acted quickly, interrogating more than two hundred people, black and white,” in short time “they soon uncovered what they believed to be a gang of dispossessed slaves and Irish indentured servants, who, it seems, had planned to burn New York City to the ground and kill their masters.”¹⁷⁶

The reality of the New York insurrection plot was fueled by propaganda encouraged by the white elite, as the public was bombarded with stories of uprisings and foreign intervention. “The insurrection story itself organized these perceptions of racial unrest” noted Doolen, “in New York in 1741 the presence of Spanish sabotage became part of the emerging plot.”¹⁷⁷ As a result, “the particular insurrection story that emerged from this context was not regional but international in scope, including a scenario in which slaves would rise up when Spain’s ships appeared on the horizon.”¹⁷⁸ Once again, the distortion of public perception was used by the colonial elite to exacerbate inter-racial and inter-class tensions, and to provoke contradictions amongst the lower classes. Howard Zinn also places preeminent value on the psychological effect of the failed insurrection on the American colonial elite:

Only one fear was greater than the fear of black rebellion in the new American colonies. That was the fear that discontented whites would join black slaves to overthrow the existing order. In the early years of slavery, especially, before racism as a way of thinking was firmly ingrained, while white indentured servants were often treated as badly as black slaves, there was a possibility of cooperation.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ Doolen, *Fugitive Empire*, 1.

¹⁷⁷ Doolen, *Fugitive Empire*, 10.

¹⁷⁸ Doolen, *Fugitive Empire*, 12.

¹⁷⁹ Zinn, *A People’s History of the United States*, 37.

As Doolen describes, the New York conspiracy of 1741, and the reactionary measures of the colonial elite, “affords us the opportunity to understand how white power transformed an inchoate fear of a slave uprising into a narrative that terrified the public.”¹⁸⁰

The threat of insurgency loomed large in early colonial America, and it was not necessarily the possibility of a settler-colonist uprising against the British empire. Along with the constant counterinsurgency warfare conducted against various Indigenous tribes, the governments of the original American colonies created mechanisms of control, designed expressly with members of the lower-classes – peasants, vagrants, servants and slaves – in mind. As we can see, from the earliest days, policing in the United States served elite interests and functioned within an overall framework of counterinsurgency. Policing also had a clear role in defining and reinforcing divisions of class and race in American society.

In conjunction with the eventual formalization of localized police forces, the synthesis of the prison system was also a key factor in solidifying a nascent bureaucracy of population control. It was therefore by no accident that the philosophical and architectural underpinnings of America’s emergent penal democracy were formulated by Jeremy Bentham, a personal associate and confidant of Andrew Jackson. In a letter written to President Jackson two weeks after passage of the Indian Removal Act on May 28, 1830, Bentham gushed:

I have this moment finished the hearing of your Message...intense is the admiration it has excited in me: Correspondent the sentiments all around me. ‘Tis not without a mixture of surprise and pleasure that I observe the coincidence between your ideas and my own on the field of legislation.¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ Doolen, *Fugitive Empire*, 12.

¹⁸¹ Bassett, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson Vol IV*, 148. Here, Bentham is speaking of American military and security policy under the rubric of Jackson’s adoption of a “liberal” doctrine. Given the timing of the letter, it should certainly be assumed Bentham was aware of the recent passage of the Indian Removal Act, which Jackson had been promoting aggressively for some time. Indeed, what ensued was a massive military and security operation that had no precedent.

It is not far-fetched to assume Bentham, the inspiration behind the modern penal state, would be enthralled with the legislated imprisonment of Indigenous people onto enclosed reservations.

Bentham became a main intellectual proponent for the widespread expansion of the penitentiary system in the United States. His famous treatise, *The Panopticon Writings*, is widely considered the theoretical foundation for the design, management, and purpose of the modern prison system. Although the complicated architecture of the “panopticon” was never fully realized, the principle of it remained. “The more constantly the persons to be inspected are under the eyes of the persons who should inspect them,” proposed Bentham, “the more perfectly will the purpose of the establishment have been attained.”¹⁸² Unlike primitive forms of brute physical punishment, according to Bentham, “the object of the inspection principle” is to make prisoners “not only *suspect*, but be *assured*, that whatever they do is known, even though that should not be the case.”¹⁸³ In effect, the prison system became the institutional embodiment of the plantation overseer. However, the penal state would focus attention not only on the slave; it followed a mandate to correct any member of the “deviant,” meaning poor, population.

In his study on the origins of the penitentiary system in the United States, Massimo Pavarini derives similar conclusions about the overall motivations for the implementation of the criminal justice system. Pavarini describes the “profound economic transformation the United States underwent during the first half of the nineteenth century” with the “emergence of a new composition of social classes” who then became the center of “a political consideration of the problem of control of the marginal classes.”¹⁸⁴ In addition to African slaves and Indigenous

¹⁸² Jeremy Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings* (New York: Verso, 1995), 34.

¹⁸³ Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*, 94.

¹⁸⁴ Massimo Pavarini, “The Penitentiary Invention: the US Experience of the First Half of the Nineteenth Century” in, Dario Melossi & Massimo Pavarini, *The Prison and the Factory: Origins of the Penitentiary System* (Hong Kong: Macmillan Press, 1981), 117.

people, the swelling ranks of the landless, poor, unemployed, vagrants, and paupers became the object of policies of law and order.

Criminalization of these social classes was justified when “poverty began to be attributed to ‘vice’ (unwillingness to work).” Pavarini explains that the governing classes concurred “that the mass of poor, the idle and vagabonds should be forcibly confined” and, as a result “the preference for confinement...was placed at the centre of the whole policy of social control.”¹⁸⁵ In *The Panopticon Writings*, Bentham wrote that, in considering “the national establishment of penitentiary-houses” their creation was for “the purpose of establishments designed to force labour.”¹⁸⁶ Outwardly, the stated goal of the penal system was to transform prisoners through imposition of a puritanical work ethic. In truth, the expansion of the prison system was motivated by the private business interests profiting directly from the hard labour of convicts. In the early 19th century, “the contract prison labor system, under which the state sold the labor power of convicts to private interests, quickly became the fiscal and disciplinary foundation of the new system.” In her history of the American penal state, Rebecca McLennan observed “as state after state adopted the Auburn [prison] system, the practice of selling the labor of convicts to private enterprise gradually became widely and deeply entrenched in penal ideology.”¹⁸⁷

The convict labour economy was used as a premise to purge rebellious tendencies, impose a hierarchical capitalist worldview on the prisoner, and, at the same time, turn a profit for the owning class. And while the stated aim of the prison was a mission of reform, as Pavarini noted, “institutionalization was transformed into...punishment in which repressive and intimidatory

¹⁸⁵ Pavarini, “*The Penitentiary Invention*”, 120-1

¹⁸⁶ Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*, 76.

¹⁸⁷ Rebecca M. McLennan, *The Crisis of Imprisonment: Protest, Politics, and the Making of the American Penal State, 1776-1941* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 53-4.

functions triumphed over the original aim of re-education.”¹⁸⁸ Professor Dylan Rodriguez takes this notion a step further, claiming that the prison, “working within the genealogical lineage of the Middle Passage, constantly prototypes technologies premised on a respatialization of bodies and coercive reembodyment of spaces.”¹⁸⁹ In sum, the American prison quickly became a space for restructuring “undesirable” persons under a highly-controlled regiment of social engineering.

In the latter-half of the 19th century, as the working-class grew more powerful, organized, and concentrated into urban centers, policing and prisons were used to regulate what was perceived by the elite class as an increasing threat to their position of dominance. As prominent ACLU civil liberties attorney and human rights scholar Frank Donner explains, “in the post-Civil War era, the growing cities were viewed as seething centers of unrest, poised on the cusp of riot and rebellion and rooted in the fear of the ‘dangerous classes’...these images and fears were intensified by mounting class conflict.” Feeding these fears were biased and sensationalized reports printed in “the most respectable publications” where editorial writers stoked the public attention to a position where “[organized] workers were widely perceived as adherents of foreign revolutionary movements, easily inflamed to reckless acts.” As Donner relates it, “complex reality was displaced by a scenario in which a crazed, marauding rabble, drawn from the ‘dangerous classes’, was repulsed and contained by the forceful intervention of the authorities.” Seen as employees in the service of the propertied class, “urban elites looked to the police for order and property protection.”¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁸ Pavarini, “*The Penitentiary Invention*”, 125.

¹⁸⁹ Dylan Rodriguez, *Forced Passages: Imprisoned Radical Intellectuals and the U.S. Prison Regime*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 239.

¹⁹⁰ Frank J. Donner, *Protectors of Privilege: Red Squads and Police Repression in Urban America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 8-9.

The demonization of immigrants from Spain, Italy, Germany, and Russia, was pre-empted by a period of violent state repression against organized workers, and, an associated concomitant ascendance of worker militancy. After the Great Railroad Strike of 1877, which brought the United States to a virtual standstill, the reaction of the gilded elite, writes historian Robert Michael Smith, “was the rise of the national guard. Less than two years after the bloody railroad strikes the National Guard Association was founded.”¹⁹¹ Professor David Stowell explains that “the violent urban disorders of the strike accelerated the repressive capacities and therefore the development of the national state.” In addition to the formation of the National Guard, “National Guard armories were built or strengthened” in most major cities.¹⁹² “In the years and decades after the strikes,” heavily fortified armories “were built to protect America not against invasion from abroad but against popular revolt at home. Their erection was a monument to the Great Upheaval of 1877.”¹⁹³

In response to the growing monopoly on violence held by the state, by the time of the nationwide May Day movement of 1886, “brigades of armed workers had grown up in a number of cities” writes historian Jeremy Brecher, “largely in response to the use of police and military forces in 1877. By 1886 they existed not only in Cincinnati, but in Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, Omaha, Newark, New York, San Francisco, Denver, and other cities, adding to the feeling that a bitter conflict was at hand.”¹⁹⁴ The May Day movement saw 340,000 workers participating in demonstrations, work stoppages, strikes, and sabotage. “Eighty thousand struck in Chicago, 45,000 in New York, 32,000 in Cincinnati, 9,000 in Baltimore, 7,000 in Milwaukee, 4,700 in

¹⁹¹ Robert Michael Smith, *From Blackjacks to Briefcases: A History of Commercialized Strikebreaking and Unionbusting in the United States* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003), 3-4. The National Guard were deployed to quell thirty-three labour disputes in the fifteen years following 1877.

¹⁹² David O. Stowell, ed., *The Great Strikes of 1877* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 7.

¹⁹³ Jeremy Brecher, *Strike!* (Boston: South End Press, 1997), 13.

¹⁹⁴ Brecher, *Strike!*, 57.

Boston, 4,250 in Pittsburgh, 3,000 in Detroit” and, according to Brecher, as a concession from the capitalists, 200,000 workers “won shorter hours.”¹⁹⁵

The insurgent character of the nationwide strikes which shook America during the week of May 1, 1886 was quickly overshadowed by the presence of an organized and well-funded counterinsurgency force. The Haymarket Square bombing in Chicago on May 3, an incident still shrouded by murky details, pre-empted further police and national security state attacks on the growing working-class movement of solidarity. The Haymarket incident, which originated as a small protest of 1,200 against police brutality, was just concluding “when to everyone’s amazement a body of 180 policemen marched in and ordered the meeting to disperse.” Brecher describes, then, “a dynamite bomb suddenly flew through the air and exploded among the police, killing one and wounding almost seventy. The police reformed ranks and fired into the crowd, killing one demonstrator and wounding many others.”¹⁹⁶ While a question remains as to whether the bomb was thrown by an agent provocateur, what is apparent is the Chicago police were at Haymarket Square to provoke violence. Under Captain John Bonfield, the police in Chicago were mercenaries of the business community; he installed a notorious regime of terror and violence against organized labour.¹⁹⁷

Across the country, the apparent inadequacies of local policing efforts were supplemented by both public and private capital. In the aftermath of Haymarket, the Pinkerton Detective Agency “was hired to work with the police” writes Donner, “to track down anarchists and to penetrate their meetings. Pinkerton men not only participated jointly with the police in raids, but also infiltrated the anarchists’ ranks and reported their doings to police and...the media.”¹⁹⁸ Again,

¹⁹⁵ Brecher, *Strike!*, 56.

¹⁹⁶ Brecher, *Strike!*, 64.

¹⁹⁷ Donner, *Protectors of Privilege*, 12-4.

¹⁹⁸ Donner, *Protectors of Privilege*, 24.

the media was helpful in creating a conducive atmosphere for increased state violence, as “popular hysteria followed” the Haymarket bombing, “the press throughout the country did everything possible to stir up such emotions.”¹⁹⁹ The few legal restraints imposed on police were seen by elites as an impediment to eradicating the threat posed by the unity of the working class. Frank Donner mentions “the official police forces...were not trusted to provide this protection. In this setting, the Pinkerton Detective Agency became a vital resource.”²⁰⁰ Robert Michael Smith concurs:

During these strike-laden years, besieged employers also began turning to private policing agencies for help. Such services fit easily into an age in which few questioned capital’s right to take steps to protect its private property. With the rise of professional societies and the coming of the professional manager, this was also an era during which American businessmen began to show a preference for expertise and specialization. Undeterred by democratic restraints and financial concerns, such agencies operated completely at the business community’s behest. Accountable only to their clients, they appeared to furnish an effective and efficient form of labor control.²⁰¹

However, as evidence of their ruthless and murderous tactics became widespread, the armed mercenaries hired to destroy organized labour eventually fell out of favour. “In addition to anti-Pinkerton laws regulating the shipment of armed guards across state lines” writes Smith “public police began to usurp these mercenaries’ function as they began to take on their modern form.” In this changing atmosphere, Smith adds “most businessmen were coming to realize that the introduction of Pinkerton-like forces, even in isolated rural environments, resulted in bloodshed and public outrage.”²⁰²

¹⁹⁹ Brecher, *Strike!*, 64-5.

²⁰⁰ Donner, *Protectors of Privilege*, 10.

²⁰¹ Smith, *From Blackjacks to Briefcases*, 4.

²⁰² Smith, *From Blackjacks to Briefcases*, 37-8.

Coming out of the Progressive Era, professionalization of public police departments became uniform as the 20th century moved forward. The business model of bureaucratization and management of local police, which would become the modern standard of policing, can be attributed to the efforts of August Vollmer. The professional model of policing was formulated when Vollmer overhauled the Berkeley, California police department starting in 1905. Vollmer emphasized crime fighting, evidence gathering, reliance on science and technology, and an overall sense of public duty and responsibility. Most divergent in the model, was Vollmer's de-emphasis on the stigmatization of the so-called "dangerous classes," and explicit instructions for police officers to remain apolitical. As Gene and Elaine Carte mention in their study on police reform in the U.S., Vollmer stressed that the professional policeman "is detached from local politics and is able to deal equally with all the social and economic classes, gaining their respect and cooperation without recourse to personal identification with any particular class."²⁰³

This idealistic approach, which had achieved relative success in Berkeley, would not resonate in other, more volatile, areas of California. Vollmer was eventually convinced to take the reins as chief of the notoriously corrupt Los Angeles police department, a position he would hold for only one year. Gene and Elaine Carte write that:

It was inevitable that the most durable of Vollmer's innovations in Los Angeles were the techniques and procedures that could bring increased efficiency into a department that had to police a large, decentralized city. The other side of his concept of policing – the policeman as a "social worker," the commitment to community involvement – had very limited application in that setting.²⁰⁴

²⁰³ Gene E. & Elaine H. Carte, *Police Reform in the United States: The Era of August Vollmer, 1905-1932* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 84. It should be noted that "Vollmer's views on other social issues were surprisingly liberal. He was evidently untouched by the wave of anticommunism that arose during the Depression...he cited unemployment, failure to deal with crime, and grafting officials as the greater threat.", 72.

²⁰⁴ Carte, *Police Reform in the United States*, 62.

Other considerations of a more political nature would also alter Vollmer's formula for professional policing. Indeed, as the end of World War I allowed for an internal focus, paranoia surrounding the possibility of a Bolshevik revolution in the United States resulted in the Red Scare. With the Palmer Raids and the subsequent flurry of politically motivated mass deportations, the police once again exhibited their blatant role as instruments of the capitalist class. At this important juncture, police forces abandoned Vollmer's vision of the politically neutral sociologist as the standard of the modern police officer; while at the same time adopting and strengthening other aspects of his approach, such as intelligence gathering, the deployment and use of scientific methods and technology, and organizational principles based along military lines.

There is no better example of the incorporation of political regulation into policing duties than the formulation of "Red Squads" in most major cities across the United States. Red Squads were specialized police units that compiled and acted upon political intelligence. As Donner explains it, in the aftermath of World War I:

Ideology supplemented behavior as a police concern...but the target this time was radicalism or subversion rather than "the dangerous classes." Radical-hunting by urban police was also spurred by collaboration with federal forces, first in the storming in 1917 of the IWW [Industrial Workers of the World] headquarters in eleven cities and the subsequent arrests of hundreds of union leaders, and then as an important operational resource in the 1919 red raids and round-up arrests. Bomb explosions in June 1919 that shattered buildings in eight cities and caused a number of fatalities were perhaps the most important single spur to the involvement of urban police in monitoring radicals.²⁰⁵

The brunt of this political repression was focused on the Industrial Workers of the World, an anarcho-syndicalist union, who, after years under siege from violence and attacks, according to

²⁰⁵ Donner, *Protectors of Privilege*, 36.

historian Melvyn Dubofsky, “was in no position to take credit for major strikes, let alone lead them.”²⁰⁶ In his autobiography, Bill Haywood, leader of the IWW (or Wobblies), spoke of the nationwide government raids of September 1917:

The country was going mad about the war. On the 5th of September, 1917, the secret agents of the Department of Justice swooped down on the I.W.W. like a cloud of vultures. The organization was raided from coast to coast, from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. The general headquarters, the main offices of the industrial unions, the industrial union branches, and the recruiting unions were in the hands of the government. Even the homes of the members were invaded. And all of this took place without a search warrant.²⁰⁷

Haywood goes on to explain “the laws that we were charged with violating were all passed after the declaration of war.”²⁰⁸ In an atmosphere of paranoia, xenophobia, and jingoism, charges of sedition and criminal syndicalism were used to throw hundreds of Wobblies in jail or out of the country. Their crime was organizing workers against exploitation. The IWW was intentionally destroyed by the government of the United States and would never recover.

Despite their relative weakness at the time of the Palmer Raids of 1919, a nationwide campaign was once again focused upon the IWW, as a young J. Edgar Hoover “sought to make deportation of alien Wobblies an automatic and mandatory procedure, and proposed the selective arrest of Wobblies in groups of five hundred in order to cripple the organization permanently.”²⁰⁹

Speaking in 1962, Wobbly leader Elizabeth Gurley Flynn recalled in 1919, when “there were company [embedded] unions that came into existence and there were criminal syndicalist laws

²⁰⁶ Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 258.

²⁰⁷ William D. Haywood, *Bill Haywood's Book: The Autobiography of William D. Haywood* (New York: International Publishers, 1929), 302.

²⁰⁸ Haywood, *Bill Haywood's Book*, *ibid.*

²⁰⁹ Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All*, 260.

that put temporary war-time sedition laws on the statute books as permanent legislation” there were also “deportation laws and all of this came in the wake of what we called the ‘Palmer Raids.’” Flynn said that “hundreds of people were scooped up one night from one end of the land to the other” as the “foreign born was put on one side for deportation” and “the native born were put on the other side for prosecution under the Criminal Syndicalist Laws.”²¹⁰ Flynn adds that, “it was at that time...I am talking about 1919, 1920, that Mr. J. Edgar Hoover first put in his appearance. He was put in charge of these raids and all reports of all over the country were to be made to him.” According to Flynn, with Hoover at the helm of what would become the FBI, “the IWW fought gallantly in its own defense and there was one of its last strikes in Denver in 1926 but by that time it was pretty well exhausted.”²¹¹

In all of America, Los Angeles was ground zero for the adoption of militant political policing. Following the bombing of *The Los Angeles Times* building in 1910, the business community in the City of Angels entrusted their police function to violent counterrevolutionaries. In their study of the LAPD, Marilyn Katz and Bob Duggan found “the early growth of police power in Los Angeles was engineered by two imposing personalities, Police Chief James Edgar Davis and the Captain of Detectives in Intelligence, in charge of the Radical Bureau, William ‘Red’ Hynes.” Hynes, head of what was known as the “Red Squad,” was “associated in the very early stages with the establishment and growth of a police intelligence bureau whose sole responsibility became the control and surveillance of ideas of social and political movements.” Katz and

²¹⁰ Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, *Memories of the Industrial Workers of the World* (New York: American Institute for Marxist Studies, 1977), 22.

²¹¹ Flynn, *Memories of the Industrial Workers of the World*, 23.

Duggan claim that ‘Red’ Hynes was instrumental “in creating one of the prototypes of the intelligence bureaus that became a model for other police agencies around the country.”²¹²

As World War I ended, political intelligence rapidly became the *modus operandi* for police departments across the United States. In his dissertation, Black Panther Party co-founder Huey P. Newton observed that:

Following the Palmer Raids, every major American city police department created intelligence divisions. From 1919 until 1925, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) arrested 504 union organizers and political activists on charges of “criminal syndicalism.” These arrests resulted in 124 convictions, most of which were obtained through the perjured testimony of police informants. The LAPD “Red Squad” became a model intelligence division whose tactics were used by other police agencies across the country.²¹³

Captain Hynes had a long history of experience in countersubversion, dating to when he enlisted in the LAPD and “was immediately assigned as an undercover agent on the waterfront. He infiltrated the Industrial Workers of the World” and, subsequently, “was credited by the Department of Justice with doing more than any other person to help the government in their operation against the I.W.W. throughout the nation.”²¹⁴

Of course, “during their reign,” with Chief Davis and Willie Hynes in command of the police, “Los Angeles was an open town; open to gambling, vice, prostitution and bootlegging. The shops and factories were open too – no unions allowed.”²¹⁵ In his own assessment of the LAPD, Donner extends this description by adding:

²¹² Citizens Research and Investigation Committee & Louis Tackwood, *The Glass House Tapes: The Story of an Agent Provocateur and the New Police-Intelligence Complex* (New York: Avon Books, 1973), 189.

²¹³ Huey P. Newton, *War Against the Panthers: A Study of Repression in America* (New York: Harlem River Press, 1996), 18.

²¹⁴ CRIC, *The Glass House Tapes*, 190-1.

²¹⁵ CRIC, *The Glass House Tapes*, 192.

The extraordinary bias, power, lawlessness, and resistance to reform movements of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and its red squad are a tribute to a unique support structure in the private sector. Virtually from its early beginnings, the red squad served as the operational arm of the anti-union crusade of the Merchants and Manufacturers Association (M&M), a confederation of over 80 percent of Los Angeles's business firms, whose stated purpose was to "break the back of organized labor" and make the city "a model open shop town" in order to ensure its members a supply of cheap labor and to attract new industries...in return for services rendered, the M&M actively promoted the [red] squad's funding and growth.²¹⁶

In an ironic twist of fate August Vollmer certainly did not foresee, his two most prodigious apprentices, O.W. Wilson and William H. Parker, would eventually take the helm of two of the most brutal and politically repressive police departments in the country.²¹⁷ Parker, who was chief of the LAPD from 1950 to 1966, "infused a strong semimilitary spirit and esprit de corps. The Los Angeles police were well paid and proud of their 'professionalism,'" writes professor of law Paul Chevigny, "but it was close to the professionalism of an army."²¹⁸ William Parker was a counterinsurgency in a police uniform. In an address delivered to the National Automatic Merchandising Association, in September 1952, Parker said "America faces the kind of attack which destroyed the brave civilizations of the past" for whom "the enemy poured through when barbarianism within rotted the moral supporting timbers." The threat to America, according to Parker, was "the armed might of Soviet Russia" and "the Communist Fifth Column within our borders."²¹⁹ While Parker did do much to remove corruption from the LAPD, he also engendered a strongly militant structure for counterinsurgency policing to proliferate.

²¹⁶ Donner, *Protectors of Privilege*, 33-4.

²¹⁷ For background information, see: William H. Parker, *Parker on Police* (Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 1957); William J. Bopp, "*O.W.*": *O.W. Wilson and the Search for a Police Profession* (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1977). Parker was Chief of the LAPD; Wilson was Superintendent of the Chicago PD.

²¹⁸ Paul Chevigny, *Edge of the Knife: Police Violence in the Americas* (New York: New Press, 1995), 36.

²¹⁹ Parker, *Parker on Police*, 49.

As the worst perpetrators of political policing in the United States, from the Haymarket incident to the founding of the red squad, the police departments of Los Angeles and Chicago had an undeniable impact on counterinsurgency policing in America. Half a century after the Red Scare, the Black Panther Party would be subject to the same apparatus of political control that was originally installed to destroy the Industrial Workers of the World. It was not by accident that the Panthers met a particularly violent and grim fate at the hands of police in the cities of Chicago and Los Angeles.²²⁰

In truth, the innovations of August Vollmer should not be mistaken as the cause of the politicization of police functions in the United States. As we have seen, Vollmer himself was adamantly opposed to the idea of police as having a hand in politics. Instead, the aspects of Vollmer's professionalization model which fit in with business models of free enterprise, which mimicked military organizational structure, and which relied upon modern technology and surveillance survived to be disseminated across America. However, the primary function of police in the United States as a regulator of radical politics was born elsewhere, through widespread testing in other countries.

²²⁰ See, for Los Angeles Black Panthers: Earl Anthony, *Spitting in the Wind: The True Story Behind the Violent Legacy of the Black Panther Party* (Malibu: Roundtable Publishing, 1990); Elaine Brown, *A Taste of Power: A Black Woman's Story* (New York: Pantheon, 1992); Flores Alexander Forbes, *Will You Die With Me? My Life and the Black Panther Party* (New York: Washington Square Press, 2006); Jack Olsen, *Last Man Standing: The Tragedy and Triumph of Geronimo Pratt* (New York: Doubleday, 2000); Wayne Pharr, *Nine Lives of a Black Panther: A Story of Survival* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2014); for Chicago Black Panthers, see: Jeffrey Haas, *The Assassination of Fred Hampton: How the FBI and the Chicago Police Murdered a Black Panther* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2010); Amy Sonnie & James Tracy, *Hillbilly Nationalists, Urban Race Rebels, and Black Power: Community Organizing in Radical Times* (Brooklyn: Melville House, 2011); Roy Wilkins & Ramsey Clark, *Search and Destroy: A Report by the Commission of Inquiry into the Black Panthers and the Police* (New York: Metropolitan Applied Research Center 1973); Jakobi Williams, *From the Bullet to the Ballot: The Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party and Racial Coalition Politics in Chicago* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

Chapter VIII

America's Colonial Laboratories of Counterinsurgency Experimentation

Techniques of counterinsurgency were honed through the U.S.-trained constabularies (gendarmerie), and later, national guard of recently acquired colonial properties. The United States created constabularies in Cuba in 1898, the Philippines in 1901, Haiti in 1915, the Dominican Republic in 1916, Panama in 1918, and Nicaragua in 1925. In all these instances, colonial constabularies were trained by the U.S. Army or Marines. And while the responsibilities of indoctrination would eventually shift to OSS, and with Kennedy, to the CIA and Special Forces, one thing remained consistent over time: the militarized policing tactics being taught overseas always found their way home. The counterintelligence measures and counterinsurgency tactics deployed by the police Red Squads to destroy the IWW and the radical left in the U.S. had, in fact, been imported from America's growing list of foreign interventions.

The Philippine Constabulary is especially instructive with regards to the practice of the continual exportation and re-importation of repressive technologies by the United States. This initial tendency, by the 1920s, grew into an unmistakable pattern which continued unabated throughout the 20th century. In his study of American imperialism in the Philippines, historian Alfred McCoy describes the colonization process as “the site of a protracted social experiment in the use of police as an instrument of state power.” He further illustrates that, as the result of being “freed of the constraints of constitution, courts, and civil society, the U.S. regime deployed its information technologies to form what was arguably the world's first surveillance state.” In observing the direct outcome of American counterinsurgency experimentation, McCoy argues:

During the first decade of U.S. rule, the colonial security services, particularly the multifaceted Philippines Constabulary, succeeded in demobilizing a deeply rooted national revolution and

advancing a conservative elite to fill the political void...the creation of sophisticated modern policing was crucial to the U.S. pacification of the Philippines. After creating a formidable counterinsurgency force, the U.S. regime installed this coercive apparatus within the Philippine colonial state, making the constabulary central to both its administration and popular perception. With strong links to the executive and minimal checks and balances, the police quickly emerged as a major factor in the country's politics.²²¹

Naturally, as an effective, field-tested method of pacification, the prolific use of counterinsurgency policing would not be limited to the Philippines. These new techniques, adapted for domestic application by U.S. authorities during the Red Scare, came about, as McCoy sees it, due to the fact, that:

Not only did colonial policing influence Philippine state formation, but it also helped transform the U.S. federal government...security techniques bred in the tropical hothouse of colonial governance were not contained at this periphery of American power...these innovations percolated homeward to implant both personnel and policies inside the Federal bureaucracy for the formation of a new internal security apparatus.²²²

The potential application of new techniques of political control and social engineering was much too tempting for U.S. authorities to deny their use on the recalcitrant members of their own "subversive" classes. The ideology of American social control experts and entrepreneurs, whether policing abroad or at home, was identical in both nature and intent.

Other aspects of American counterinsurgency policing emerged in the period of extra-continental expansion. The installation of an elite "native" class ideologically sympathetic to capitalism was a requisite aspect of the U.S. colonial blueprint. In the Philippines, this took a form where elites were encouraged to implement a census through a combination of political

²²¹ McCoy, *Policing America's Empire*, 16.

²²² McCoy, *Policing America's Empire*, 17.

advancement and monetary rewards. “In November 1903, provincial governors were notified that they had automatically been appointed census supervisors,” writes historian Paul Kramer “at a salary increase of \$150 per month.” In cooperating with the development of America’s colonial surveillance state, “the census as a symbol of future state devolution took hold among Filipino elites” says Kramer, “it was in part because census-taking itself followed the boundaries of the collaborationist state so closely. This was out of logistical necessity.” Soon, soldiers and scouts of the Philippine army were “eligible for appointment as supervisors, special agents, and enumerators” of the census. Kramer adds “reliance on emerging networks of collaboration was also political.” For the Americans, the census represented a “political litmus test, with the absence of resistance – or the strength of Filipino collaboration – standing as evidence of consensus.” The census was definitely an issue of contention for the Filipino insurgency, where, “in at least some cases, census-takers were nonetheless targets of armed resistance.”²²³

Operating in tandem with the inculcation of a “nativized” elite class was America’s well-funded effort to train, equip and indoctrinate “nativized” police forces. An immediate and unmistakable pattern emerged, as the U.S. Army and Marine trained-police quickly implanted themselves as the favoured American-installed political elite. For the American client regimes in Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic, high-ranking members of the Guardia Nacional used their newfound political power to seize absolute control of their countries.

In Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic, ruthless dictatorships, consolidated and backed by American-trained and supported police forces, would last for decades. The regimes of Trujillo, Somoza, and Duvalier arose in the wake of US-backed counterinsurgency warfare and the violent dissolution of strongly rooted national revolutionary movements. All three dynasties

²²³ Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, & the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 220-2.

were formed after extended American military occupations and the implementation of imperial governance by proxy. Despite the fact Trujillo and Duvalier eventually betrayed their American handlers, collectively, as clients of the United States, these dictatorships accumulated some of the most appalling human rights records of the 20th century.

“The emergence of Haiti as a sovereign nation in the West Indies created fears of a black uprising in the United States” writes historian Leon Pamphile. “Slave insurgency and black liberation movements were a major threat for Southern plantation owners. American slaveholders were both dismayed by the successful revolution and feared the prospect that it might be exported to Cuba, Puerto Rico, and their own land.”²²⁴ At the dawn of the 20th century in Haiti, any incident mildly perceived as “civil strife” then “prompted the United States to send warships to Port-au-Prince harbor to protect American lives and property nearly every year from 1902 until the Marines came to stay in 1915.” According to Pamphile, this was precipitated through “invoking the Monroe Doctrine as rationale.”²²⁵

Professor Mary Renda writes that “by the turn of the century, U.S. marines had landed on Haitian soil eight times,” yet, “by 1913 President Wilson and his advisers were searching for a way to translate that position into definitive control.” Of course, according to the Wilson administration, this impulse had little to do with US capitalist interests in banking and railroads. For Wilson, the moment to acquire colonial property for America was justified, due to “the instability of the Haitian government” and the “political immaturity on the part of Haitians.”

²²⁴ Leon D. Pamphile, *Contrary Destinies: A Century of America's Occupation, Deoccupation, and Reoccupation of Haiti* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2015), 11.

²²⁵ Pamphile, *Contrary Destinies*, 21.

Following a rationale steeped in racism and paternalism, the desire to take Haiti was finalized, “culminating in the decision to land marines and sailors on July 28, 1915.”²²⁶

On the other side of Hispaniola, “warships visited Dominican shores at State Department behest on dozens of occasions between 1911 and 1916.” When “the U.S. Navy landed a force in Santo Domingo in May 1916,” it was for an extended occupation. Military intervention was chosen because of a “nationalist crisis” which was “precipitated by the insistent demands of the Wilson administration that the Dominican government turn over control of its budget, public works, and armed forces to the United States.” Historian Eric Roorda insists that “as in Haiti, the military and diplomatic representatives of the United States pressed the nation’s political leaders to accept without compromise Wilson’s demands for control of important government functions.”²²⁷ Professor Jeremy Kuzmarov adds that “a main purpose” of the American military occupation in the Dominican Republic “was to fight the insurgents in the eastern provinces, who were a product of the disempowerment of local caudillos.” American sugar interests had monopolized land use, and the insurgency drew power from “the uprooting of the peasantry caused by economic reorientation toward cash crop exports.”²²⁸

American military intervention and occupation in Nicaragua had a long-standing and pronounced history, more than that of even Haiti or the Dominican Republic. “Between 1853 and 1933 United States marines invaded Nicaragua twenty times” wrote Colombian diplomat Clara Nieto, “in one case, they stayed five years, in another, twenty-one.”²²⁹ The United States had

²²⁶ Mary A. Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 30.

²²⁷ Eric Paul Roorda, *The Dictator Next Door: The Good Neighbor Policy and the Trujillo Regime in the Dominican Republic, 1930-1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 15-6.

²²⁸ Jeremy Kuzmarov, *Modernizing Repression: Police Training and Nation-Building in the American Century* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012), 46.

²²⁹ Clara Nieto, *Masters of War: Latin America and U.S. Aggression from the Cuban Revolution Through the Clinton Years* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003), 128.

long viewed Nicaragua with a sense of strategic preoccupation, where, as early as 1823, “the question of a trans-Nicaragua canal was raised” with “several proposals for canal construction from British and North American capitalists.”²³⁰ During the period of American global expansion, “U.S. Marines landed in Nicaragua in 1909 and returned in 1912, with a legation guard remaining in the country until 1925.” In addition, writes historian Richard Grossman, “when the last U.S. Marine was withdrawn in that year, U.S. officials insisted on the formation of a constabulary.”²³¹ Yet, unlike Haiti and the Dominican Republic, the United States “did not form an occupation government in Nicaragua,” however, “Nicaragua’s military forces were under direct control of the United States, and the Marines commanding the Guardia reported to the U.S. secretary of the navy.”²³²

In Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic, American counterinsurgency police forces and their “native” trainees, commissioned under various titles such as constabularies, gendarmerie, or national guard, were in all instances used as a violent bulwark against widespread popular resistance to invasion and occupation by the United States. It is in these early post-continental colonial pursuits that an unmistakable pattern emerged: the American government and military’s expansion and transference of counterinsurgency warfare developed in earlier campaigns against dozens of Indigenous tribes and the Southern Confederacy.

During the American occupation of 1915, the Cacos insurgency in Haiti grew in strength and numbers as they drew support from a population obviously displeased with an invasion by racist American marines. Their sovereignty trampled, the Haitians were further degraded by an old

²³⁰ Karl Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States Since 1848* (Boston: South End Press, 1986), 15.

²³¹ Richard Grossman, “The Blood of the People: The Guardia Nacional’s Fifty-Year War Against the People of Nicaragua, 1927-1979” in, Cecilia Menjivar & Nestor Rodriguez, eds., *When States Kill: Latin America, the U.S., and Technologies of Terror* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 60.

²³² Grossman, “The Blood of the People,” 64.

corvée law imposed by US Marines which forced civilians to build roads, bridges, and other public works. “The methods employed by Gendarmerie officers to enforce the corvée were fueled by racism and the rank desire for mastery and no doubt were inflamed by Haitian resistance” writes professor Mary Renda. “Gendarmes took peasants forcibly from their homes, roped them together, and used brutal discipline with the corvée gangs,” Renda adds “the process itself reinforced Haitians’ belief that this was indeed a new form of slavery.”²³³ A surge in civilian rebellion led “to the renewed vigor of the Cacos,” because “simply put, the corvée drove Haitians to the Cacos.” In reaction, “marines themselves fought more viciously,” and a counterinsurgency operation ensued where “more than 3,000 Haitians, and possibly thousands more, were killed in military campaigns against the Cacos, with even higher numbers wounded.”²³⁴ Without question, the war fought in Haiti by the U.S. Marines against the Cacos insurgency fits into the wider narrative of a historically preeminent American focus on counterinsurgency doctrine.

The most infamous dictatorship in Haiti, that of the father-son duo of Francois and Jean-Claude Duvalier, would not reign until some time after the U.S. military occupation. Lasting from 1957 to 1986, the Duvalier dynasty relied on the gendarmerie, or “La Garde d’Haiti”, to maintain their universally unpopular grip on power. “With American backing, the Haitian army exercised tight control over the country’s political process. Throughout the years, military officers made and broke presidents.” Pamphile adds “the army consistently used its power to attain political objectives for itself and the ruling elite.”²³⁵ Francois “Papa Doc” Duvalier manipulated this structure masterfully, and, in creating his own dreaded secret police, the

²³³ Renda, *Taking Haiti*, 148.

²³⁴ Renda, *Taking Haiti*, 150-1.

²³⁵ Pamphile, *Contrary Destinies*, 30.

Tontons Macoutes, he also consolidated his dictatorship by intentionally reducing the power of the military. “Duvalier found an alternative to Army power by starting his own High Secret Police of the Palace. This militia consisted of several score of armed and masked plainclothesman” who chose to “fulfill their assignments mostly at night.”²³⁶ With direct lineage to the American inspired counterinsurgency policing of La Garde d’Haiti, the Tontons Macoutes were described as “thugs, thieves, and murderers”²³⁷ by Kuzmarov; while Pamphile adds “the despicable acts of the Tontons Macoutes, Duvalier’s personal police force, included sanctioned murder, rape, and torture.”²³⁸ As a difficult and embarrassing ally of the United States, the Duvaliers nonetheless maintained a ruthless counterinsurgency apparatus conducive to foreign capitalist penetration.²³⁹

In the Dominican Republic, as in Haiti, a popular insurgency was quelled with the landing of U.S. Marines and a protracted counterinsurgency campaign. “The Marine occupiers pursued the goal of complete civil order in the towns, where an indignant Dominican polity resented the loss of sovereignty,” and especially, writes professor Roorda, “in the countryside, where nationalist guerrilla resistance persisted.”²⁴⁰ As author Eric Thomas recounts, “in 1916, the Dominican Republic was occupied by U.S. troops” yet, although “marine detachments were deployed in the larger cities, the United States relied on local troops to suppress the recurring rebellions.”²⁴¹

Enacting a regime of social control, the U.S. Marines declared a censorship decree, enforced an

²³⁶ Pamphile, *Contrary Destinies*, 73-4.

²³⁷ Kuzmarov, *Modernizing Repression*, 45.

²³⁸ Pamphile, *Contrary Destinies*, 72.

²³⁹ “Papa Doc” Duvalier, an independent-thinking and recalcitrant black nationalist, became too much of a liability in the eyes of the Kennedy administration. An assassination/coup was plotted, but “efforts by President John Kennedy, in collaboration with Juan Bosch of the Dominican Republic, failed to secure the removal of Duvalier.” Pamphile, *Contrary Destinies*, 81. “Baby Doc” was much more pliable.

²⁴⁰ Roorda, *The Dictator Next Door*, 17.

²⁴¹ Eric Chester Thomas, *Rag-Tags, Scum, Riff-Raff, and Commies: The U.S. Intervention in the Dominican Republic, 1965-66* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001), 12.

order to disarm the population, and, in addition, “Marine guards patrolled the streets of Dominican cities, and Marine intelligence officers gathered information about those opposed to the occupation.” Professor Eric Roorda also writes of the implementation of an early incarnation of the strategic hamlet, where, “in order to isolate the guerrilla fighters in the field, the Marines gathered the rural population into ‘concentrations,’” where Marines “also gathered intelligence on the membership and movements of the guerrilla forces.”²⁴²

During this time, the Dominican Guardia Nacional was trained by the Marines to absorb the duties of an imperial proxy force. Out of the Guardia came the man who would rule the Dominican Republic from 1930 to 1961. Rafael Trujillo’s “rise and extended rule resulted from the education he received and the relationships he formed during the Marine occupation.”²⁴³ According to Eric Thomas, Trujillo “ruled the Dominican Republic as his own personal fiefdom, plundering, looting, and raping at will.” For over three decades “the Dominican people lived in constant terror. Anyone even suspected of disloyalty was subject to the attentions of shadowy intelligence agencies, notorious for their frequent use of torture and murder.”²⁴⁴ Roorda agrees with this assessment, saying “Trujillo’s rise to power was owing to his personal domination of the military, and military intimidation was the foundation of his social and political domination of the country”, he aggressively imposed “a reign of terror against actual and potential opposition to his authority.”²⁴⁵ Trujillo, who was a human rights and public relations disaster for American policymakers, was, for a time, a perfect tool for the extension of U.S. policy objectives in the Caribbean.²⁴⁶

²⁴² Roorda, *The Dictator Next Door*, 17-8.

²⁴³ Roorda, *The Dictator Next Door*, 21.

²⁴⁴ Thomas, *Rag-Tags, Scum, Riff-Raff, and Commies*, 12.

²⁴⁵ Roorda, *The Dictator Next Door*, 90.

²⁴⁶ The uncontrollable and volatile Trujillo had fallen out of favour with the United States by the time the Kennedy administration approved of his assassination in May 1961. Trujillo infuriated Kennedy with his

The extended history of American intervention in Nicaragua would cease for a time during the Somoza dictatorship, a family dynasty lasting from 1937 to 1979. Much like the Dominican Republic's dictator, Raphael Trujillo, Anastasio Somoza rose to power through the ranks, and finally leadership of, the Guardia Nacional. With American encouragement and assistance, Somoza centered his power around his personal counterinsurgency force after the defeat of the popular Sandino revolutionary movement.

Finding "the presence of troops in his country and Washington's interference in its internal affairs" to be "intolerable," Augusto Cesar Sandino, "decided to resort to arms, and he formed an army made up of workers, most of them from United States companies. He himself worked for a mining company and local campesinos." According to Nieto, "Sandino wanted social recovery and the expulsion of the invaders. He did not aspire to power. He inflamed the people's nationalism, and soon they saw him as their leader and a hero." Sandino, who began a six-year civil war, "aroused admiration all throughout Latin America from students, intellectuals, and politicians in solidarity with this struggle against interventionism, imperialism, and Uncle Sam's big stick."²⁴⁷ The danger he posed to the stability of the American business climate, not just in Nicaragua, but in every nation in Latin America and the Caribbean, was met forcefully and resolutely. Sandino was ambushed and assassinated in February 1934, during the supposed neutrality of a government approved cease-fire, on orders from the commander of the Guardia, Anastasio Somoza.

The death of Sandino was not the only victory for Somoza and his Guardia Nacional. In their six-year war with the Sandinistas, the Guardia and the U.S. Marines obtained valuable

own attempted car-bomb assassination of staunch Alliance for Progress ally, and Camelot protégé, Venezuelan President Romulo Betancourt. See: Kolko, *Confronting the Third World*, 161-2; Schmitz, *Thank God They're On Our Side*, 244-6; Thomas, *Rag-Tags, Scum, Riff-Raff, and Commies*, 15-7

²⁴⁷ Nieto, *Masters of War*, 128.

experience in fighting insurgencies. “As commander of Company M, which was subsidized by rich Segovian merchants and coffee growers” explains professor Kuzmarov, “the Sandinista campaign was headed by ‘Chesty’ Puller, by now a veteran of the Caco war in Haiti.”²⁴⁸ As the American counterinsurgency lineage moved forward, some unmistakable patterns emerged.

Evoking Agamben and his theory of *homo sacer*, historian Richard Grossman writes:

While Sandino unquestionably organized a nationalist resistance force, U.S. policymakers defined Sandino and his soldiers as bandits. This decision helped define the military tactics that were to be used. Since the United States was not fighting a legitimate military foe, it was argued, the rules of war (such as they were) did not apply. The Marines and the Guardia saw little distinction between the Sandinistas and the civilian population; not only combatants but also civilians were targeted...almost the entire civilian population was considered a justifiable target.²⁴⁹

Karl Bermann wrote that in “the war against Sandino all the elements had appeared...that would become so familiar forty years later during Vietnam.” In a war against the people of Nicaragua “there were the inevitable barbarities and the difficulties of trying to explain this ‘police action’ being conducted against those who were, it was asserted, merely a group of outlaws.”²⁵⁰

In Nicaragua, from 1927 to 1933, the counterinsurgency tactics of Jackson and Sherman emerged, as Marines and the Guardia “carried out a ‘semi-scorched-earth policy.’” According to Grossman, “houses, food, animals, and whatever other types of supplies that might be used by the ‘bandits’ were to be destroyed.” This was in addition to the “patrols [who] opened fire on civilian houses with casualties including men, women, and children.” Worse still, in presaging Vietnam once again, “the Marines, and then the Guardia, also tried a policy of ‘concentration,’

²⁴⁸ Kuzmarov, *Modernizing Repression*, 49.

²⁴⁹ Grossman “The Blood of the People,” 69.

²⁵⁰ Bermann, *Under the Big Stick*, 205.

where whole areas were supposed to be cleared of civilians, forcibly if necessary, and the areas turned into what were later called ‘free fire zones.’”²⁵¹

Indeed, Anastasio Somoza and his son of the same name would uphold their client regime with a doctrine of counterinsurgency which can be attributed directly to American influence. These counterinsurgency lessons were well-heeded by Somoza and the Guardia Nacional: the Somoza dynasty would not end until 1979, after forty-two years in power, toppled this time by a successful Sandinista revolution.

The first decades of the 20th century bore witness to the transformation of America into a formidable empire, one which was installed, maintained, and protected by police. As we have seen, the most loyal of the American client-regimes were run by hand-picked U.S.-trained policemen turned dictators. In her study of the Brazilian police, a U.S.-constructed torture and assassination squad that reigned from 1964 to 1985, professor Martha Huggins concludes that:

The use of armed force by a modern state against any of its citizens is ordinarily defined as the legitimate and exclusive prerogative of the state. But when domestic police forces become a tool in international relations, the presumed monopoly becomes permeable...[the Brazilian dictatorship is] a situation in which police have been transformed into a security force beyond the nation state’s full control, in part by being used to promote the interests of another state, and partly by devolution of the state’s powers of violence to extralegal forces.²⁵²

It is important to emphasize, as did Huggins, the primacy of the supposition of police as illegitimate and illegal entities in these situations. Time and again, illegal American intervention

²⁵¹ Grossman, “The Blood of the People,” 70-2.

²⁵² Martha K. Huggins, *Political Policing: The United States and Latin America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 197.

into the affairs of other nation-states would be pre-empted and facilitated through the deployment of well-funded and highly sophisticated counterinsurgency policing networks.

As professor Huggins mentioned, in instances of U.S. expansion “domestic police forces become a tool in international relations.” But what if that statement were also true of domestic policing within the United States? When examining the Red Scare and the destruction of the IWW, it is clear international events had a direct impact on policing strategy and initiatives in America. In describing the nature of the America’s imperial policing apparatus, historian Jeremy Kuzmarov could just as easily be outlining police structures within the United States:

The central aim of the police programs was to promote the social stability deemed necessary for liberal capitalist development and to strengthen the power of local elites serving American...interests. Driven by the Progressive Era emphasis on professionalization and modernization, the programs were critical in recruiting local intelligence “assets” and in establishing sophisticated surveillance apparatus to monitor and destroy social movements deemed threatening to the United States. Police were valued more than the military as the “first line of defense” against subversion and were seen as best capable of implementing “civic action” programs designed to “win hearts and minds.” They were trained in riot control and counterinsurgency and even taught bomb making.²⁵³

The United States subsumed this global imperial policing apparatus from its inception, and, as a result, this came to be reflected throughout the political landscape in America. In the early decades of the 20th century, American counterinsurgency policing was applied in a self-perpetuating manner by which foreign and domestic usage were mutually reinforcing. Therefore, the purges of the Palmer Raids, a direct result of methods used concurrently in the Philippines, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua, were a precursor to the more extensive use of martial law and police-state tactics imposed during the various urban uprisings and against

²⁵³ Kuzmarov, *Modernizing Repression*, 232.

political radicals in the 1960s and 1970s.²⁵⁴ It was not accidental that the United States was also engaged, at that moment, in some of the most horrific examples of anti-civilian warfare in Southeast Asia and Latin America. The mutually reinforcing pattern of domestic and foreign counterinsurgency operations, which began long before Kennedy's time in office, would also be harnessed extensively by the United States long after his assassination.

²⁵⁴ The most infamous of these rebellions, or as some prefer, riots (or police riots), were: Harlem in 1964, Watts in 1965, Detroit and Newark in 1967, and at the Democratic National Convention of 1968 in Chicago. See: Malcolm McLaughlin, *The Long Hot Summer of 1967: Urban Rebellion in America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Gerald Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995); David Farber, *Chicago '68*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

Chapter IX

The CIA, the Police & the Campus: Counterinsurgency as Social Engineering

Following a path set out by McKinley, Roosevelt, and Wilson, President Kennedy was by no means the man who originally developed America's international counterinsurgency police.

After all, Kennedy's predecessor was a president who in 1954 called for "recognizing the police as the first line of defense against subversion and insurgency." President Dwight D. Eisenhower, writes political scientist Michael Shafer, funded "the police assistance program [which] began as the Civil Police Branch (later named the Overseas Internal Security Program, OISP) of the International Cooperation Agency and started training operations in 1955."²⁵⁵ Yet, while Eisenhower merely carried forward a bureaucracy that was already in place, Kennedy invested his own personal interest and resolve behind expanding these operations. He was responsible for the rapid growth of the infrastructure, and the preeminent focus to formulate policy and fund programs which carried forth the gospel of modernization through counterinsurgency warfare.

In 1962, Kennedy reorganized Eisenhower's OISP as OPS, the Office of Public Safety, an arm of the Agency for International Development (USAID). Martha Huggins explains "the president wanted civil police training administered by a separate branch within AID, with its own internal budget, personnel, and logistical autonomy...its police programs were to be accorded priority treatment by the rest of the agency."²⁵⁶ The general mandate of OPS was the centralization of all police assistance to foreign countries. More specifically, writes Ethan Nadelmann, "it provided aid to police agencies in approximately fifty Third World nations, spending more than \$300 million on training, weaponry, and telecommunications and other

²⁵⁵ Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 86-7.

²⁵⁶ Huggins, *Political Policing*, 107.

equipment.” By 1971, OPS “had trained over one million police officers in forty-seven nations” writes Alfred McCoy, “including 85, 000 in South Vietnam and 100, 000 in Brazil.”²⁵⁷ In his analysis, Nadelmann exposes the cycle of exporting and re-importing tactics and technologies of repression:

Hundreds of active and retired American police officers were sent to these countries, where they trained tens of thousands of police officials in administration, riot and traffic control, interrogation, surveillance, intelligence, and...thousands of mid- and high-level police officials from those countries came to Washington to study at the OPS-run International Police Academy.²⁵⁸

A variety of international police academies teaching American counterinsurgency methods would proliferate in this era; the most famous schools were the previously mentioned International Police Academy in Washington, DC, but also, the Inter-American Police Academy in the Panama Canal Zone, and the School of the Americas at Fort Benning, Georgia (formerly located in Panama).²⁵⁹

Hidden from public scrutiny, these international police academies, filled with hand-picked officers from client-regimes throughout the world, became a conduit for the type of clandestine activities typical of counterinsurgency and psychological warfare. Secrecy became entrenched in these activities as the CIA and Special Forces took over the primary role of international police training. In his book *Hidden Terrors*, about CIA-trained police in Uruguay, A.J. Langguth wrote: “in Washington, the Office of Public Safety had remained immune to public embarrassment as it went about two of its chief functions: allowing the CIA to plant men with the local police in

²⁵⁷ Alfred W. McCoy, *A Question of Torture: CIA Interrogation, from the Cold War to the War on Terror* (New York: Henry Holt, 2006), 60.

²⁵⁸ Nadelmann, *Cops Across Borders*, 113.

²⁵⁹ See: Lesley Gill, *The School of the Americas: Military Training and Political Violence in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

sensitive places around the world...[and] bringing to the United States prime candidates for enrollment as CIA employees.”²⁶⁰ Thus, the CIA infiltrated “police professionalization” efforts.

An effective, professional and modernized police force was assumed to be a compulsory condition for enabling a conducive environment for American speculators, investors and industrialists in the Third World. Despite evidence to the contrary, wrote Michael Shafer, OPS “did assume the legitimacy of governments being aided. Moreover, it assumed that they were the managers of the development process.” As a result, for American officials, “public order was thus defined as obedience to the laws of whatever regime happened to be in power.”²⁶¹ As historian Michael McClintock commented, “the Public Safety Program did not entirely neglect assistance in conventional law enforcement; but its emphasis tended toward counterinsurgency doctrine.” As a result, the OPS became known for “CIA training, assistance, and operational advice to foreign political police, and for linking the United States to the jailers, torturers, and murderers of the most repressive of ‘free world’ regimes.”²⁶²

Over time, the Central Intelligence Agency would play an increasingly prominent role administering the training and advising aspects of U.S. foreign police assistance. “CIA police activities necessarily required institutional cover” related professor Huggins, “provided by the CIA’s mostly covert relationship with the AID Office of Public Safety.”²⁶³ Agreeing, in part, professor McCoy states a little more forcefully:

In effect, the problem was how to expand U.S. AID’s existing police program into an instrument for a more aggressive CIA internal-security effort among Third World allies. The solution, apparently, was to increase the public safety program within U.S. AID and simultaneously place

²⁶⁰ A.J. Langguth, *Hidden Terrors* (New York: Pantheon, 1978), 124-5. In its beginnings, the head of the Inter-American Police Academy was “Theodore Brown, a former police chief from Eugene, Oregon.”, 52.

²⁶¹ Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 88.

²⁶² McClintock, *Instruments of Statecraft*, 190.

²⁶³ Huggins, *Political Policing*, 107.

it under the control of CIA personnel – notably the program’s head, Byron Engle...[who] recruited CIA personnel for the program and provided close coordination with the agency’s intelligence mission.²⁶⁴

Carrying over from his role as head of Eisenhower’s Civil Police Administration, Byron Engle would fill the top position in OPS for its entirety, from 1962 to 1973. Engle was a former Kansas City police officer who began abroad when he trained the Japanese police after World War II. Subsequently adapting his trade for the Turkish police, Engle finally joined the CIA in 1950 to work for the agency in the same capacity. Professor Martha Huggins wrote that under Kennedy, “Engle was to report directly to a presidential special assistant for internal defense.”²⁶⁵ “Engle built a force of eighty police advisors, whom he stationed around the world.” By 1968 when the OPS “program attained its peak strength” it had “a total of 458 advisors in thirty-four countries.”²⁶⁶ In truth, Engle came from a common mould; he was not the first, and would be far from the last, to propel the CIA’s control of American foreign police operations.

The indoctrination of police officers by the CIA was not contained solely to the periphery of empire. As ex-CIA agent Victor Marchetti explained in the early 1970s, the agency regularly trained cops in cities like New York and Chicago. Marchetti raised important concerns about the accountability of the police programs, saying “the tactics used by the CIA to cover its tracks in this instance were typical of the kind of deception that the agency has generally used to conceal its numerous activities inside the United States...probably no other program is handled with greater secrecy.” Additionally, and more disturbingly, Marchetti also asks “why did the agency at first try to cover up and then mislead Congress, the press, and the public about its activities?”

²⁶⁴ McCoy, *A Question of Torture*, 61.

²⁶⁵ Huggins, *Political Policing*, 107.

²⁶⁶ Nadelmann, *Cops Across Borders*, 112-3.

Why could the same [domestic police] training not have been given by the FBI, which maintains facilities and has legal authorization for that purpose?”²⁶⁷ The answer to this, while complex in its entirety, points in the direction of the universal dissemination of political policing, with counterinsurgency methods as an integral component for not only developing – but maintaining – the modernized capitalist nation-state. The CIA, and not the FBI, had the field experience and networks to spread counterinsurgency doctrine far and wide.

As a matter of practice, a plethora of CIA counterinsurgency and police programs took over American academic institutions. As Marchetti described, “Michigan State University had been used by the CIA from 1955 to 1959 to run a covert police-training program in South Vietnam. The agency had paid \$25 million to the university for its service, and five CIA operators were concealed in the program’s staff.”²⁶⁸ Adding to this, ex-CIA agent Ralph McGehee recalls the same initiative, where “to police the rural areas the CIA, along with teams from Michigan State University, created and trained the 50, 000-man Civil Guard whose mission, according to CIA National Intelligence Estimate 63-56, was ‘to maintain law and order, collect intelligence, and conduct countersubversive operations at the provincial level in areas pacified by the army.’” By intertwining the CIA police program into South Vietnam’s civilian bureaucracy, McGehee witnessed a situation where:

The Agency helped Diem develop his political power through creation of the Can Lao Party...which required members at all levels to serve as informants for its intelligence-collection programs. The party, as with all other CIA programs, became obsessed with detecting disloyalty

²⁶⁷ Victor Marchetti & John D. Marks, *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* (New York: Dell, 1974), 216-7.

²⁶⁸ Marchetti & Marks, *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*, 226. Ramparts magazine exposed this story and received the brunt of CIA ire as a favoured target of the domestic MH/CHAOS program. See: Warren Hinckle, Robert Scheer, and Sol Stern, “Michigan State: The University on the Make [or how MSU helped arm Madame Nhu],” *Ramparts* (vol.4, no.12, 4/1966), 11-22; Peter Richardson, *A Bomb in Every Issue: How the Short, Unruly Life of Ramparts Magazine Changed America* (New York: New Press, 2009); Angus MacKenzie, *Secrets: The CIA’s War at Home* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

and concentrated its efforts on the police function...at the core of the intelligence-countersubversion network was Diem's dreaded Vietnamese Bureau of Investigation – a CIA-created security service.²⁶⁹

The type of indexing systems used by the CIA in South Vietnam to root out subversion had been crafted decades earlier in the Philippines. This system was modified for domestic use with the initiation of the FBI's "Security Index" during the Palmer Raids. "At one point in the mid-1950s," wrote ex-FBI agent Wesley Swearingen, "the Security Index and the Communist Index totaled approximately 50, 000 names in Chicago." In the case of a national emergency, Swearingen questioned whether "it would have been necessary to set up tents in Soldier Field [Chicago Bears football stadium] to house all those arrested."²⁷⁰

American University in Washington, DC, was also home to important CIA counterinsurgency programs, namely ethnographic studies linked to civilian indexing systems. Working for the Pentagon-funded Project Camelot, American University's Special Operations Research Office updated studies started under the auspices of the U.S. Army Handbook Program in the 1950s, known as "Human Relations Area Files." The original funding for what amounted to cultural anthropology mixed with census-taking came from sources like the Carnegie Corporation, the Ford Foundation, and Standard Oil Company.²⁷¹

Under Project Camelot, cultures were catalogued and analyzed for strict counterinsurgency applications. Anthropologist David Price examined the technical aspects of the "M-VICO System of Counterinsurgency Taxonomy," an indexing and intelligence gathering system, which,

²⁶⁹ Ralph W. McGehee, *Deadly Deceits: My 25 Years in the CIA* (Melbourne: Ocean Press, 1999), 134.

²⁷⁰ M. Wesley Swearingen, *FBI Secrets: An Agents Expose* (Boston: South End Press, 1995), 41.

²⁷¹ David H. Price, *Cold War Anthropology: The CIA, the Pentagon, and the Growth of Dual Use Anthropology* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 252. It should be mentioned that Price details the CIA's evasiveness in publicly associating itself with Project Camelot – eventually, they were forced to admit their role.

“organized data relating to specific regional counterinsurgency efforts, and it strove to compile a retrievable database for...social scientists formulating theories of counterinsurgency designed to aid in suppressing insurgent movements arising in cultures around the globe.” Price sees M-VICO “as a cultural artifact informing us of resilient institutional ways of viewing culture as a counterinsurgency tool”²⁷² and as a “logical extension of...historical military roots merging with the deep institutional needs for disarticulated cultural knowledge by a military seeking to weaponize culture.”²⁷³

At Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, Dr. Harold Wolff ran a program for the CIA with similar methods and intentions as Project Camelot. From the early 1950s until the mid-1960s, Wolff was director of the Human Ecology Society, later known as the Human Ecology Fund. Dr. Wolff, who “offered Agency officials the cooperation of his colleagues at Cornell,” wrote ex-State Department official John Marks, “taught neurology and psychiatry in the Medical College.” Marks explains that Wolff “pressed upon the CIA his idea that to understand human behavior – and how governments might manipulate it – one had to study man in relationship to his total environment.”²⁷⁴ An advocate of torturous interrogation and sensory deprivation techniques to alter the human psyche, Wolff “offered to devise ways to use the broadest cultural and social processes in human ecology for covert operations.” According to Marks, Dr. Wolff “understood that every country had unique customs for...nearly every...form of human intercourse. From the CIA’s point of view...this kind of sociological information could be applied mainly to indoctrinating and motivating people.” Overzealous in his duties, to carry forward his mission,

²⁷² Price, *Cold War Anthropology*, 264-5.

²⁷³ Price, *Cold War Anthropology*, 267. For an account of the implementation of Project Camelot in Chile during Operation Condor, see: McSherry, *Predatory States*, 51-2.

²⁷⁴ John Marks, *The Search for the Manchurian Candidate: The CIA and Mind Control* (New York: WW Norton, 1979), 157.

Wolff “asked the Agency to give him access to everything in its files on threats, coercion, imprisonment, isolation, deprivation, humiliation, torture, ‘brainwashing,’ ‘black psychiatry,’ hypnosis, and combinations of these with or without chemical agents.”²⁷⁵ Not surprisingly, the Human Ecology Fund was eventually absorbed by Dr. Sidney Gottlieb’s much larger MK-ULTRA mind control project.

These programs were by no means isolated to Cornell, Michigan State, and American University. Various projects took place at the universities of Illinois, Maryland, Oklahoma, California at Berkeley, Harvard, Stanford, and Columbia. On April 13, 1953, newly appointed CIA director Allen Dulles “authorized Operation MK-ULTRA,” which “was the brainchild of Richard Helms,” himself a future director of the CIA.²⁷⁶ Much like the weaponization of culture, these highly-placed men also thought and hoped that hallucinogens and other drugs could be utilized as effective weapons in modern warfare. At McGill University in Montreal, extensive LSD and sensory deprivation experiments were carried out on unwitting civilians for the CIA by Dr. Ewen Cameron, a recurring figure in CIA mind control efforts.²⁷⁷

Powerful derivatives of LSD, such as STP and BZ, were synthesized. “More promising than LSD is agent BZ,” wrote psychological warfare expert Peter Watson. BZ “is a psychochemical that was developed specifically as an incapacitating agent for chemical warfare. In small doses it causes sleepiness and decreased alertness; within four to twelve hours there is an inability to respond effectively to the environment or to move about. In some ways it is the perfect military weapon.”²⁷⁸ In their book, *Acid Dreams*, Martin Lee and Bruce Shlain also describe BZ, “a drug

²⁷⁵ Marks, *The Search for the Manchurian Candidate*, 159.

²⁷⁶ Martin A. Lee & Bruce Shlain, *Acid Dreams: The Complete Social History of LSD, the CIA, the Sixties, and Beyond* (New York: Grove Press, 1985), 27.

²⁷⁷ McCoy, “Mind Control” in, *A Question of Torture*.

²⁷⁸ Peter Watson, *War on the Mind: The Military Uses and Abuses of Psychology* (London: Anchor Press, 1978), 222-3.

called quinuclidinyl benzilate,” which the army had learned “inhibits the production of a chemical substance that facilitates the transfer of messages along the nerve endings, thereby disrupting normal perceptual patterns.” Lee and Shlain add that although “the effects generally last about three days,” symptoms, such as, “headaches, giddiness, disorientation, auditory and visual hallucinations, and maniacal behavior” were discovered to last for extended periods “as long as six weeks.”²⁷⁹

Paul Robeson Jr., son of African-American communist Paul Robeson – a highly respected and influential activist, artist, athlete and internationalist – believes his father’s life was irreparably damaged by a CIA dosing of BZ in March of 1961. After Robeson spent time in Ghana at the behest of President Kwame Nkrumah, and immediately before a planned visit to Cuba on invitation from Fidel Castro, Robeson Jr. claims his father was dosed during a stay in Moscow. Shortly after a suspicious incident at a party hosted by Americans, Robeson suffered hallucinations and delusions, and became withdrawn, suicidal, paranoid and depressed. Robeson was subsequently committed to the Priory in London, England, and underwent an extreme regimen of electro-shock treatments and regular doses of various incapacitating tranquilizers and anti-psychotic drugs. “In May 1963 I learned that my father had received fifty-four ECT treatments.”²⁸⁰ Robeson Jr. also commented that he “found this combined treatment especially troubling, because it resembled the ‘mind de-patterning’ treatment funded by the MKULTRA Project, which consisted of ‘intensive electroshocks, usually combined with prolonged, drug-induced sleep.’” Having been told by a former CIA agent that future DCI Helms had a vendetta against his father, Robeson Jr. adds “the similarity is noteworthy because by early 1962 Richard Helms, the creator of the MKULTRA Project, had been elevated to the post of deputy director of

²⁷⁹ Lee & Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 41.

²⁸⁰ Paul Robeson Jr., “The Paul Robeson Files,” *The Nation* (vol.269, no.21, 12/20/1999), 9.

plans and was in direct communication with Hoover concerning Paul's health."²⁸¹ Whatever the truth is of his decline, Robeson was immobilized as an effective political force as of March 1961. Robeson's mental health would continue to deteriorate, and he would die a relative recluse in 1976, a shadow of his former self.

How widespread the CIA's effort to weaponize drugs and devise mind control techniques will probably never be fully understood. There exists enough evidence, however, to show that the mind control program was a top priority at the highest levels of the CIA. "The decision to employ LSD on an operational basis was handled through a special committee that reported directly to Richard Helms," write Lee and Shlain, "who characterized the drug as 'dynamite' and asked to be 'advised at all times when it was intended for use.'" While the agency boys dosed one another with LSD as a frat-boy hazing ritual, sometimes proving fatal, the deployment of weaponized drugs became yet another dimension of counterinsurgency warfare.²⁸² "Fidel Castro was among the Third World leaders targeted for surprise acid attacks," explain Lee and Shlain, "Egyptian president Gamal Abdal Nasser also figured high on the CIA's hallucinogenic hit list." MK-ULTRA's figurative godfather, Dr. Sidney Gottlieb, "carried a stash of acid overseas on a number of occasions during the Cold War with the intention of dosing foreign diplomats and statesmen."²⁸³

²⁸¹ Paul Robeson Jr., *The Undiscovered Paul Robeson: Quest for Freedom, 1939-1976* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2010), 326.

See also: http://www.democracynow/1999/7/1/did_the_cia_drug_paul_robeson; and, <http://www.counterpunch.org/.../04/01/did-the-cia-poison-paul-robeson>.

²⁸² The unfortunate and tragic case of Dr. Frank Olson is illustrative of the CIA frat-boy culture. After an unwitting dosage of LSD, on November 28, 1953, Olson went mad and ended up plunging from the ninth story window of a hotel room while under CIA quarantine. See: Marks, "Concerning the Case of Dr. Frank Olson" in, *The Search for Manchurian Candidate*; McCoy, *A Question of Torture*, 30; Lee & Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 30-2. Interestingly, Paul Robeson Jr. wrote that in June of 1998, "I met Dr. Eric Olson in New York, and we were both struck by the similarities between the cases of our respective fathers." Robeson Jr., "The Paul Robeson Files," 9.

²⁸³ Lee & Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 35.

Gottlieb's countersubversive concoctions were not limited to drugs. Patrice Lumumba, first leader of an independent Congo, was the target of one of the most bizarre operations of the MK-ULTRA era. "QJ-WIN [a European assassin] had been supplied with a tube of poison toothpaste, which had been delivered to the CIA station in Leopoldville by Sidney Gottlieb, the agency's wizard of toxins." In his book, *The Devil's Chessboard*, David Talbot identifies the usual suspects, as, "Dr. Ewen Cameron, of the notorious Allan Institute, had analyzed Lumumba at the CIA's request and determined that he must brush his teeth regularly, since they looked gleaming white in photos. Therefore, Ewen assured [Alan] Dulles, chemically altered dental products were the key to getting rid of Lumumba."²⁸⁴ As absurd as this scenario seems, it was accepted as a legitimate aspect of the new counterinsurgency by DCI Allen Dulles. Patrice Lumumba would not die from brushing his teeth. His assassination would result from a coordinated international effort following the lead of the CIA. Joseph Mobutu would take power in the Congo at the same time as John F. Kennedy in the United States; Lumumba was murdered three days before Kennedy's inauguration. The prolonged public denial of Lumumba's death was yet another aspect of an elaborate American campaign of psychological warfare.²⁸⁵

When the CIA decided on a program of mind control, replete with electroshock, drugs, and torture, it was drawing its methods from a newfound source of intelligence. As we have seen, in the aftermath of World War II, the Americans incorporated British and French theories of counterinsurgency into a doctrine of modern warfare. In addition, the United States protected,

²⁸⁴ David Talbot, *The Devil's Chessboard: Allen Dulles, the CIA, and the Rise of America's Secret Government* (New York: HarperCollins, 2015), 380.

²⁸⁵ Talbot makes the claim that "After Kennedy's inauguration, the CIA continued to keep Lumumba's death under wraps. On January 26, Dulles briefed the new president on the Congo. The CIA director said nothing about Lumumba's assassination, though his fate was well known by then within the agency...the Kennedy White House remained in the dark about Lumumba for a full month after his murder. When JFK finally heard of the leader's death, the news came not from Dulles but from UN ambassador Adlai Stevenson." Talbot, *The Devil's Chessboard*, 386-7.

aided, abetted, harboured, and employed Nazis long after the war. “The Machiavellian attitude behind these operations was born when a World War II ally became a new enemy and the world axis shifted,” explains author Linda Hunt. “To fight the Russians we turned to the men responsible for the horrors committed under Hitler and hired them to work as scientists, saboteurs, and spies. Over time these operations took on a life of their own.”²⁸⁶ Known as the “rat-line,” Operation Paperclip landed Nazis in America, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Bolivia, and Paraguay.

The momentum of U.S. counterinsurgency shifted towards mind control, torture, and especially, the deployment of drugs as a weapon, through collaboration with Nazi scientists and intelligence. The blowback from these “Machiavellian” acts did not dissuade perpetrators of Nazi collusion, but, if anything, rewarded them with further promotion and power. Indeed, as a young man “Henry Kissinger served in the U.S. Army Counterintelligence Corps at the end of World War II,” explains political scientist Patrice McSherry, “and after the war he was assigned to a unit that was involved in the recruitment of former Nazis.” Professor McSherry also points out that in 1950, Kissinger “served as a consultant to another unit that carried out classified Defense Department studies on the use of Nazis for CIA covert operations” as he “continued to work on intelligence and covert operations in the 1950s through his links to the National Security Council.”²⁸⁷

The post-Reich life of Klaus Barbie, a Gestapo chief in France, is especially instructive when analyzing the consequences of the absorption of Nazi assets by the CIA. Embodying the role of the counterinsurgent police-torturer, psywar expert, and death squad leader, Barbie was

²⁸⁶ Linda Hunt, *Secret Agenda: The United States Government, Nazi Scientists, and Project Paperclip, 1945 to 1990* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1991), 264.

²⁸⁷ McSherry, *Predatory States*, 41.

especially coveted by the CIA and was recruited as a Cold War operative. With American intelligence protection, Barbie escaped to Bolivia with his family to start anew. While instructing various South American intelligence agencies on the finer points of torture and psychological warfare, he also became quite wealthy trafficking cocaine and selling weapons.²⁸⁸ As historian Ariel Armony writes, “under the regime of Garcia Meza, Bolivia became a sanctuary for Nazi war criminals and Italian neofascist terrorists. Klaus Altmann – better known as Klaus Barbie, the Butcher of Lyon – received the honorary rank of lieutenant colonel in the Bolivian army.” Armony adds that “Altmann advised the Bolivian security forces on interrogation and torture techniques.” At the same time, the former SS-man formed networks with other European fascist terrorists throughout the Southern Cone, notably, “Stefano delle Chiaie [who also] operated within the Bolivian military intelligence service,” an asset of the CIA’s secret “stay-behind armies” in Cold War Europe, “delle Chiaie, a...protégé of the Italian secret lodge Propaganda Due (P-2), worked in Bolivian army operations section (G-3), commanding paramilitary groups.”²⁸⁹

Barbie was also involved in several fascist coups in Bolivia and Argentina from the 1960s to the 1980s. The most infamous of these was the Bolivian “cocaine coup,” which, ostensibly, gave the country’s drug lords control of the government. “The coup took place in July 1980, toppling a short-lived civilian government,” wrote professor Peter Dale Scott and Jonathan Marshall,

²⁸⁸ Alexander Cockburn & Jeffrey St. Clair, “Klaus Barbie and the Cocaine Coup” in, *Whiteout: The CIA, Drugs, and the Press* (New York: Verso, 1998), 167.

²⁸⁹ Ariel C. Armony, *Argentina, the United States, and the Anti-Communist Crusade in Central America, 1977-1984* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1997), 30. Delle Chiaie also worked for General Pinochet and Chilean intelligence (DINA). He gained considerable infamy as one of the most prolific terrorists amongst a group of well-connected CIA-sponsored fascists. Under Gladio and Condor, delle Chiaie partnered with terrorists like the American, Michael Townley, and Cubans, Orlando Bosch and the Novo brothers. They were collectively responsible for the Cubana airline bombing; public bombings in Europe attributed to the Red Brigades; and the September 1976, assassinations of Orlando Letelier, Chilean foreign minister for Salvador Allende, and his American secretary, Ronni Moffitt, in Washington DC.

“Argentina had infiltrated agents into Bolivia to work with military plotters and with Klaus Barbie, the escaped Nazi war criminal and former U.S. intelligence agent who was their close ally...the Argentines had as many as two hundred military personnel in Bolivia to coordinate the seizure of power.”²⁹⁰ For years, under the umbrella of the CIA’s Operation Condor, the governments of Argentina and Bolivia funded their counterinsurgency efforts with cocaine. Barbie and other CIA-protected Nazis and assorted European fascists, of course, were instrumental to both the cocaine traffic and the continent-wide intelligence coordination and collaboration of Operation Condor.

Of all his sordid exploits, the hunting of French resistance fighters during World War II became a specialty of Butcher of Lyon. It was this morbid skill that eventually found Barbie in the jungles outside of Vallegrande, Bolivia, helping to track Che Guevara for the CIA.²⁹¹ Accompanying Barbie on this mission was Felix Rodriguez, an anti-Castro Cuban terrorist in the employ of the CIA. Earning his stripes as one of the mercenaries on the prowl for Guevara, Rodriguez, perhaps more than any individual, including Klaus Barbie, embodies the continuity of American counterinsurgency doctrine. Not only did he assist in hunting and assassinating the most dangerous revolutionary in Latin America, he also flew cocaine and weapons for the CIA and Medellin cartel during the Reagan-era Contra Wars in Central America. Ex-DEA agent Celerino Castillo III exposed Rodriguez in his memoirs, *Powderburns*, where he recalled “in Nicaragua, Hasenfus [US adviser to the Salvadoran Air Force] named the two Cuban-Americans who helped run the [cocaine and arms] supply operation. One of them was Max Gomez. Vice President George Bush immediately hailed Gomez as ‘a patriot,’ and in a slip of the tongue,

²⁹⁰ Peter Dale Scott & Jonathan Marshall, *Cocaine Politics: Drugs, Armies, and the CIA in Central America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 44.

²⁹¹ Cockburn & St. Clair, “Klaus Barbie and the Cocaine Coup,” 177-8.

called him 'Felix Gomez.' Gomez, of course, was Felix Rodriguez."²⁹² During the Cold War years, fascist terrorists were favoured frequently and deployed abroad gratuitously by their CIA handlers as indispensable clandestine operatives.

The decision to work extensively with Nazis propelled a situation with significant negative ramifications, not only for Americans, but for people all over world. The practical application of knowledge gained from the symbiosis of Nazi and American intelligence varied widely. In Europe, fascist "stay-behind" armies employed provocateurs, sabotage, and terrorism against the Left during the Cold War; drugs such as LSD were used experimentally by the CIA in foreign and domestic capacities; and a block of fascist dictatorships were ushered into power in South America. Despite negative media attention related to these activities at certain points from the 1970s to the 1990s, the story of American-Nazi collaboration is largely forgiven and forgotten. From a strictly pragmatic viewpoint, as a system of empire, the United States did benefit in the long term from experiments in Nazi-style countersubversion. German counterinsurgency methods left their mark throughout American institutions, from the intelligence bureaucracy, to universities, and police departments all over the globe. For the people living under Pinochet in Chile, Banzer in Bolivia, Stroessner in Paraguay, or the Generals in Argentina, the sanctioned employment of Nazis by the CIA was not a benign matter; for millions, this arrangement resulted in immense suffering.

Certainly, the practice of harbouring Nazis and using their talents in the fight against communist subversion fit into the overall matrix of American intelligence operations during the Cold War. Collaboration between the CIA and Nazis also reflects an ongoing centuries-long process of the apolitical and amoral development of counterinsurgency tactics by the United

²⁹² Celerino Castillo III, *Powderburns: Cocaine, Contras, and the Drug War* (Oakville: Mosaic Press, 1994), 173.

States. At the dawn of the Kennedy-era, America already had in place vast and intricate programs of torture, interrogation, and mind control; the weaponization of cultures, drugs, and other toxins was administered under a large, self-propelling bureaucracy; a widespread international fascist terrorist network was deployed regularly as a countersubversive tool; and a far-reaching global police training program had created dozens of “nativized” imperial proxies. The infiltration of counterinsurgency into academic institutions, corporations, intelligence agencies, and police departments occurred long before the Camelot era. Through his own interest and devotion, John F. Kennedy would only bolster, and not define, the growth and momentum of the American counterinsurgency institution.

This section has covered the importance of militarized police as the primary instrument of American counterinsurgency implementation, both at home, and abroad. Tracing the roots of American policing to the plantation slave patrols of the South, there develops a continuity of policy: from the conquest of colonies in the Pacific and Caribbean, to the destruction of the radical working class at home.

The next section will bring a focus to counterinsurgency in the Camelot era. Histories of Kennedy-era foreign policy initiatives are traditionally dominated by studies of Cuba, Vietnam, and Laos. Diverging from this repetitive conversation, the final section will explore some rarely discussed sites of foreign intrusion during JFK’s presidency: Guatemala, Peru, Brazil, Guyana, and Thailand. As we will see, President Kennedy’s counterinsurgency imprint of intervention, expansion, and provocation is prevalent in all the case studies. As a result, the American counterinsurgency blueprint had an undeniable impact and long-term ramifications for all the countries involved.

Part III

U.S. Counterinsurgency Doctrine in Practice – Innovations in Global Terrorism

JFK Redux: Fires Before the Phoenix

Observing the apparent failure of Kennedy-era counterinsurgency policy, author John Newman wrote “the Special Group’s charter was so broad that it was almost impossible to achieve...the military did not take counterinsurgency seriously and the administration’s effort in Vietnam was anything but unified.”²⁹³ In analyzing this policy by judging the outcome of the war in Vietnam in terms of decisive military victory, Newman missed the significance of the experimental nature of U.S. counterinsurgency in this period. The global ideological struggle required laboratories for observing and improving upon a constantly adaptive and evolving doctrine of counterrevolution. Vietnam, though of central importance, was but one of many imperial testing grounds.

Kennedy’s counterinsurgency doctrine is widely perceived as a failure because of the Bay of Pigs invasion and Ed Lansdale’s various and ridiculous assassination plots against Fidel Castro. Often, the Strategic Hamlet Program in South Vietnam, and the clandestine wars in Laos, are also prominently situated in a dialogue related to JFK’s misguided foray into the world of covert action as civic action. When compared to the success of CIA victories in Iran and Guatemala during the Eisenhower administration, on the surface, Kennedy mismanaged the implementation of an already high-functioning counterinsurgency infrastructure. These assumptions are based on a perspective which focuses on conventional notions of resolute, clear-cut political and military dominance. As the result of this oversimplified analysis, the CIA’s contemporaneous activities in

²⁹³ Newman, *JFK and Vietnam*, 178.

Brazil, Peru, Guyana, Guatemala, and Thailand are often overlooked as being significant counterinsurgency operations. The importance of these American interventions, while historically obscured from recognition, is that they conform to a distinctive, emerging pattern, and exhibit the predilection of a future direction for American counterrevolutionary activity.

As Americans attempted to move beyond memories of Vietnam in the 1980s and 1990s, public sentiments of regret and repentance often prevailed. Kennedy's former Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, was at the forefront of this call to exorcise the demons of a genocidal war. On the other side of the spectrum, Walt Rostow forever maintained that the war in Vietnam was a just cause and a victory for the United States. He pointed to the capitalist nations of Asia, and members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as proof that modernization had won out over communism.²⁹⁴ According to this logic, millions of deaths were justified for the ends of an American foreign policy of endless military expansion and corporate penetration. Yet, despite his popular appeal, McNamara's disingenuous apologies in no way negate the validity of Rostow's perspective. As for the continued application of American counterinsurgency doctrine to the present time, the Pentagon and the Central Intelligence Agency have certainly adopted credos promoted, if not invented, by Walt Rostow.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁴ ASEAN is comprised of Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, and Brunei.

²⁹⁵ Rostow attacked McNamara in this period as a coward and a traitor. For the contrasting stories and perspectives of McNamara and Rostow in the 1980s and 1990s, see: Milne, *America's Rasputin*, 247-54.

Chapter X

Guatemala

Though generally underacknowledged, Kennedy's sponsorship of counterinsurgency programs in Central and South America ran parallel to those found in Southeast Asia. American interest and involvement in Guatemala continued long after the Eisenhower-era CIA intervention against the regime of social-democrat and Guatemalan nationalist Jacobo Arbenz in June of 1954. As Kennedy came to office, there were fears that either Arbenz or his popular predecessor, Juan Arevalo (1945-1951), would regain political power. Arevalo, a professor of philosophy in Argentina and self-proclaimed "spiritual socialist," was the first freely elected president in Guatemala's history. The entrenched landowning elite saw him as a threat and branded him a communist. "Arevalo had not been in power one month before he faced his first revolt," writes historian Richard Immerman, "and by the time he ended his six-year term as president he had successfully survived over twenty-five attempted coups."²⁹⁶ Both Arevalo and Arbenz were despised by the Guatemalan elite and American business interests for their focus on land redistribution policies and social welfare programs.

As described by Edwin Martin, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs under Kennedy, "I was made aware of the fragile political structure in Guatemala and of the heavy shadow hanging over it of Juan Jose Arevalo...he was in exile next door in Mexico and we believed he wanted to become President again at the elections scheduled for the fall of 1963." Reinforcing the Eisenhower policy of intervention, for the Kennedy administration "our concern was that he had opened the door for the election as his successor of Jacobo Arbenz Guzman,

²⁹⁶ Richard Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala: The Foreign Policy of Intervention* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), 57.

another former president who was so friendly to the local communists that the military had ousted him in 1954 with U.S. encouragement.”²⁹⁷ Challenging Martin’s heavily sanitized official viewpoint, Immerman argues that “had the CIA-sponsored ‘blitzkrieg’ not accomplished the desired psychological effect, and had the Guatemalans not fallen for the Voice of Liberation’s [propaganda] ruse, Arbenz’s government undoubtedly would have survived.”²⁹⁸

For Kennedy, there was more to this strategy than simply keeping Arevalo or Arbenz from power, propping up the *ladino* owning class, and appeasing American corporate interests. Like Panama before it, Guatemala became an important training ground for the jungle warfare being fought during counterinsurgencies in Latin America and the Caribbean. As Colombian diplomat Clara Nieto details, “the Kennedy administration’s strategy of counterinsurgency was tried out principally in Guatemala. In 1962 the United States installed a secret training base for the army in Guatemala, and for the first time set into motion the civil-military actions of this strategy.”²⁹⁹

The “beans and bullets” campaign of pacification was also a clever cover for mounting counterinsurgency operations against the revolutionary government in Cuba. The grand strategists under JFK prized Guatemala as a launchpad for attacks against Castro’s regime. “President Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes permitted the CIA’s secret contracting of Guatemalan officers at high salaries to train Cuban troops at the Campo Trax,” wrote Jennifer Schirmer. These soldiers were the supposed shock-troops “for the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion.”³⁰⁰ Professor of history Jesus Arboleya described the American preparations for the Bay of Pigs invasion in Guatemala:

²⁹⁷ Edwin M. Martin, *Kennedy and Latin America* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1994), 117.

²⁹⁸ Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala*, 168.

²⁹⁹ Nieto, *Masters of War*, 141.

³⁰⁰ Jennifer Schirmer, *The Guatemalan Military Project: A Violence Called Democracy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 15.

The 2506th Brigade was the paramilitary group entrusted with carrying out the invasion. The CIA organized the paramilitary arm independently...and established direct channels to communicate with and supply the internal clandestine groups...the training of the 2506th Brigade took place primarily in Guatemala. A force initially numbering 300 intended for guerrilla operations was in the end made up of 1,200 officers and men trained for regular combat as amphibious forces.”³⁰¹

A large contingent of Guatemalan officers, who were loyalists of the Arevalo and Arbenz era, and who had varying degrees of respect and admiration for Fidel Castro, would not tolerate the continued American abuse of their sovereignty. “When the Guatemalan government agreed to support US actions against Cuba,” recounts historian Marc Drouin, “almost a third of the military revolted in November 1960. The effort failed to overthrow the regime and a handful of rebels sought refuge in the mountains of eastern Guatemala, firing the opening rounds of a 36-year internal armed conflict.”³⁰²

Kennedy’s civic action programs in Guatemala quickly became guided more by “bullets” than “beans.” American counterinsurgency operations devolved into increased United States support for the Guatemalan military and their *ladino* landowning elite benefactors in their push to exterminate the insurgent Mayan peasant population. Anthropologist Lesley Gill writes that “racist, anti-indigenous reasoning provided much of the basis for the Guatemalan military’s genocidal campaign.”³⁰³ Yet, the civil war was not fueled entirely by racism, and this explanation alone does not suffice. “The naturalization of political violence into a cultural fact was produced, in part, through the creation and promotion of a language or pattern of political violence that – while it generated terror – at the same time obfuscated the political economy of

³⁰¹ Jesus Arboleya, *The Cuban Counterrevolution* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000), 82-3.

³⁰² Marc Drouin, “Understanding the 1982 Guatemalan Genocide” in, Marcia Esparza, Henry R. Huttenbach & Daniel Feierstein, eds., *State Violence and Genocide in Latin America* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 83.

³⁰³ Gill, *The School of the Americas*, 55.

its own production,” writes Gabriela Torres.³⁰⁴ In her study of the Guatemalan military, Schirmer came to similar conclusions:

Without a structural analysis of violence as intrinsic to the logic of counterinsurgency, a regime that violates human rights seems to occur simply because of uncontrollable, bloodlusting commanders or poorly disciplined peasant recruits who need to be given a code of conduct – a view that ironically serves as an essentialist rationale by militaries for why they cannot control their own forces. Rather than being irrational and out of control, many of these Latin American militaries are precisely in control and acting in their own best interests.³⁰⁵

In the case of Guatemala, the “best interests” of the military and landowning elite were determined by the “best interests” of the United States government and American corporations. “In Guatemala over the course of the civil war, the increasingly complex documentation and resulting bureaucratization of violence made possible the development of counterinsurgency policy aimed not at eliminating a small guerrilla movement but rather directed at controlling the general population.” Torres maintains that “establishing control of the population secured an advantageous political and economic position for the country’s military elite – the Guatemalan armed forces – and its political allies.”³⁰⁶

The beneficiaries of this violence, not surprisingly, were often Guatemalan military officers trained at the School of the Americas, who were the continuing recipients of U.S. support and funding. “Their wealth” says professor Gill:

Is often less the product of sound business investments than the outcome of decades of plunder and state-sponsored violence. That some members of the [Guatemalan] armed forces utilized their

³⁰⁴ M. Gabriela Torres, “*Bloody Deeds/Hechos Sangrientos: Reading Guatemala’s Record of Political Violence in Cadaver Reports*” in, *When States Kill*, 143-4.

³⁰⁵ Schirmer, *The Guatemalan Military Project*, 4.

³⁰⁶ Torres, “*Bloody Deeds/Hechos Sangrientos*,” 144.

access to state power to enrich themselves, their families, and their friends and to dispossess others through corruption and brutal forms of primitive accumulation is an established fact.³⁰⁷

However, the financial status of the Guatemalan military elite, while a motivating factor for the “nativized” American proxies, was not the reason the United States had invested so heavily in building a counterinsurgency warfare apparatus in the country. By the mid-1960s “the U.S. model of special warfare and pacification taken directly from Vietnam was established in Guatemala during the civilian regime of President Mendez Montenegro [1966-1970].” According to professor Schirmer, “government death squads inflicted massive repression in the city and in the countryside. A brutal pacification program in Zacapa and Chiquimula directed by an estimated 1000 Green Berets, took the lives of between 5000 and 10,000 peasants.”³⁰⁸ In another parallel to the counterinsurgency experimentation in Vietnam, the Guatemalan military also attempted to corral peasants into strategic hamlets.³⁰⁹

The revolving-door of American counterinsurgency personnel who were so crucial to operations in Southeast Asia also found an abundance of employment opportunities in Guatemala. Historian Greg Grandin tells the story of John Longan, a former police officer in Oklahoma and Texas, who “arrived in Guatemala in 1957 as part of the first wave of advisors sent by the United States to foreign countries, a police corps to train local police forces.” Moving through Brazil, Venezuela, Thailand, and the Dominican Republic in the same capacity, Longan returned to Guatemala in 1965 “to set up a rapid-response security unit.” Grandin explains further:

³⁰⁷ Gill, *The School of the Americas*, 90.

³⁰⁸ Schirmer, *The Guatemalan Military Project*, 36.

³⁰⁹ Ricardo Falla, *Massacres in the Jungle: Ixcán, Guatemala, 1975-1982* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 117-8.

Within three months this squad, working under the name Operacion Limpieza (Operation Cleanup), had conducted over eighty raids and multiple extrajudicial assassinations, including an action that during four days in March captured, tortured, and executed more than thirty prominent left opposition leaders. The military dumped their bodies into the sea while the government denied any knowledge of their whereabouts...among those murdered...[were] the respective leaders of Guatemala's labor and peasant federations during Arbenz's tenure.³¹⁰

Typical of the psychology of the counterinsurgent, Longan, by his logic, clouds his own role in genocide by attributing the violence in Guatemala to a natural predisposition of the people, where, to use the words of Longan, "it is inbred in them" and "they hate pretty deeply."³¹¹

The genocidal counterinsurgency campaign of the U.S.-supported Guatemalan military dictatorship would reach a crescendo in 1982, under president Reagan's favoured leader, the particularly sadistic General Rios Montt. According to Drouin, "the monthly death toll in Guatemala rose significantly at the time, from 800 under Lucas Garcia, to over 6,000 under General Rios Montt."³¹² The American puppet regimes in Guatemala would go on to murder over 200,000 people. Despite the scale of human atrocity and historic injustice, events in Guatemala during the Reagan administration would be overshadowed by other American counterinsurgency campaigns in El Salvador and Nicaragua.

In typical fashion, former CIA Chief of Station for Laos, Douglas Blaufarb, deflected American culpability in the Guatemalan atrocities, despite undeniable involvement. According to Blaufarb, because of "urban supporters of guerrillas resorting to assassinations," the U.S. sponsored Guatemalan government retaliated "by sponsoring vigilante-style terrorism. In the

³¹⁰ Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 73.

³¹¹ Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre*, *ibid.*

³¹² Drouin, "Understanding the 1982 Guatemalan Genocide," 92.

midst of this reign of terror and counter-terror the principles of enlightened counterinsurgency were overwhelmed and forgotten.”³¹³ Of course, denial of culpability requires denying that counterinsurgency intentionally and systematically imposes regimes of terror in order to effectively control targeted populations. The opinion of a CIA officer like Blaufarb is predictable, but grossly inaccurate; the historical record of American intervention in Guatemala is conclusive in recognizing terror as foundational to U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine.

³¹³ Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era*, 285.

Chapter XI

Peru

To the south, the socio-economic and political realities of Peru were similar in many ways to those found in Guatemala. A small landowning elite continually ignored demands from landless Indigenous peasants for agrarian reform - and relied upon right-wing dictatorships to maintain the status quo. “In the late 1950s,” writes professor Gerardo Renique, “months before the victory of the Cuban Revolution, a massive peasant movement rocked the foundations of the Peruvian state and society, ushering in a crisis in legitimacy and hegemony that has remained unresolved until this day.”³¹⁴ Kennedy’s Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Edwin Martin, proclaimed “orderly social change was essential but resisted by the wealthy oligarchy backed by the Catholic church and the military...1% of the rural population owned 60% of the cultivated land. Half the population were poor and illiterate Indians.” According to Martin, this situation “provided one of the best illustrations of a ‘potential for social revolution.’”³¹⁵ Gabriel Kolko describes a peasant population that “was as miserable as any on the continent, and over them ruled an aristocratic rural elite with immense economic and political power, deeply involved in export agriculture and allied to foreign interests, but also dominant in banking, real estate, and mining.” Kolko adds “U.S. investment was concentrated in mining, smelting, and petroleum,” as International Petroleum Company, a subsidiary of Standard Oil, had a “four-hundred-thousand-acre concession” from the Peruvian government.³¹⁶

³¹⁴ Gerardo Renique, “‘People’s War,’ ‘Dirty War’: Cold War Legacy and the End of History in Postwar Peru” in, Greg Grandin & Gilbert M. Joseph, eds., *A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence During Latin America’s Long Cold War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 316.

³¹⁵ Martin, *Kennedy and Latin America*, 342.

³¹⁶ Kolko, *Confronting the Third World*, 213-4.

The United States had been providing military training and assistance to the Peruvian government since the 1940s.³¹⁷ During the same period that Americans were organizing the Peruvian military, the people of Peru organized themselves. By 1960, explains Clara Nieto, “the nation was at the boiling point. The people had fought for twenty years for a political opening and the democratization of the country.” Nieto continues, “the rightist military dictatorships had ended, and the country was undergoing a transformation. Students, the people, and an impoverished lower middle class were becoming radicalized, and a powerful people’s, union, student, and campesino movement, which demanded change, was gaining strength.”³¹⁸ While some members of this movement committed their energies to the traditional leftist political party, the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA); many others found APRA too reformist and accommodationist, and founded decidedly more militant groups of their own, most notably, the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR: Movement of the Revolutionary Left), and Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional (ELN: National Liberation Army).

By 1960, at a moment when the people’s movement in Peru was gaining significant momentum, the Peruvian military had prepared and was already well-adapted for an internal war against dissent. In the 1950s “President Odria’s anticommunism was rewarded with a substantial increase in U.S. military assistance, from a meager \$100,000 in 1950 to over \$9 million in 1956.” Continuing, professor Renique adds:

Between 1950 and 1966 almost four thousand Peruvian military personnel were trained either in the United States or in the Panama Canal Zone...between 1949 and 1969 more than eight hundred officers received additional specialized training in the infamous School of the Americas...drawing upon this experience, the Peruvian army established a specialized counterinsurgency unit whose training included study of the Vietnam War. Peru’s own

³¹⁷ David Scott Palmer, ed., *The Shining Path of Peru* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), 11.

³¹⁸ Nieto, *Master of War*, 188.

counterinsurgency campaign ran parallel to the escalation of the U.S. war in Southeast Asia...the U.S. experience in Vietnam inspired and strengthened the Peruvian military resolve.³¹⁹

It was at this time, in the early days of the Kennedy administration, when former CIA agent Victor Marchetti described a scenario where “Green Berets participated...in what was the CIA’s single large-scale Latin American intervention of the post-Bay of Pigs era.” Marchetti claims “the agency secretly came to the aid of the Peruvian government, then plagued by guerrilla troubles in its remote eastern regions” where covertly, “the agency financed the construction of what one experienced observer described as ‘a miniature Fort Bragg,’” a facility with “mess halls, classrooms, barracks, administrative buildings, parachute jump towers, amphibious landing facilities...helicopters were furnished under cover of official military aid programs.” Marchetti also admits, “the CIA flew in arms and other combat equipment. Training was provided by the agency’s Special Operations Division personnel and by Green Beret instructors on loan from the Army.”³²⁰

Journalist Gustavo Gorriti describes a similar counterinsurgency build-up in Peru by the Kennedy administration in the wake of the Bay of Pigs. “This effort reached its height in Peru with the formation of the Sinchi counterinsurgency battalion in the then remote jungle settlement of Mazamari. Having foreseen the spread of pro-Castro guerrillas,” explains Gorriti:

American counterinsurgency functionaries concentrated on setting up and training a special forces unit, modeled on their American counterparts, to confront and defeat guerrillas in their own element. Mazamari was built as a self-sufficient jungle base for the training and housing of special forces. Training was given by the Green Berets and trainers from the CIA’s Special

³¹⁹ Renique, “‘People’s War,’ ‘Dirty War,’” 325.

³²⁰ Marchetti & Marks, *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*, 137.

Operations Division. All equipment, from uniforms to parachutes, was financed by the United States government.³²¹

A particularly vicious counterinsurgency campaign was conducted by Peruvian forces throughout the 1960s, under both civilian and military governments. The Peruvians adopted techniques being used in the Vietnam War, including “massive carpet bombings, creation of ‘strategic hamlets,’ targeting of civilian population, and large-scale population relocations.” Professor Renique also writes of how the army engaged in “mass rape, torture, summary executions, disappearances, and dropping individuals from planes or helicopters,” and adds, “the air force carried out massive napalm bombing raids in the areas surrounding...guerrilla bases.”³²²

With the assistance of the CIA and Special Forces, counterinsurgency became entrenched and overshadowed true reform. This directly contradicts Edwin Martin’s claim that during his time in the Kennedy administration, they “questioned the amounts [Peru] spent on their military with development needs so great.”³²³ A brief hiatus of military rule, in part an attempt to placate the simmering rebellion, failed to eliminate the insurgency, as “the civilian government from 1963 to 1968 had been a reformist one...[and] the 1968 military coup occurred primarily because the civilian government had failed to carry out fully reform initiatives.” Now with years of counterinsurgency experience, the new Peruvian military government would attempt to embark upon “a vigorous army-led civic action program.”³²⁴ Dubbed the “Nasserites,” after Egyptian President Gamal Adbel Nasser, “the military officers of the revolutionary government were

³²¹ Gustavo Gorriti, *The Shining Path: A History of the Millenarian War in Peru* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 146.

³²² Renique, “‘People’s War,’ ‘Dirty War,’” 326.

³²³ Martin, *Kennedy and Latin America*, 358.

³²⁴ Palmer, *The Shining Path of Peru*, 11.

progressive, nationalist, anti-imperialist, and anti-oligarchy.”³²⁵ Yet this posturing amounted to nothing but another attempted appeasement of the rising tide of insurgency. As David Palmer commented “once in power, the military called itself revolutionary but practiced reform...the military’s policies were not based on redistributing the existing pie.”³²⁶

Despite outward proclamations of non-alignment in the Cold War, the Peruvian military government, while courting Soviet assistance, maintained and exceeded earlier trends in military cooperation and support from the United States. The “Peruvian government” reports professor Lesley Gill “increased annual defense expenditures from 7.2 percent between 1970 and 1974 to 22 percent between 1974 and 1977.” In addition, specialized counterinsurgency training was rapidly expanded, as “1,820 Peruvians trained at the SOA [School of the Americas] between 1970 and 1975.”³²⁷ In power from 1968 to 1980, the supposed “leftist” leanings of the Peruvian military government were obviously a propaganda coup. “Peru apparently joined the Condor Group in 1978” at the same time as Ecuador.³²⁸ Joining their fascist neighbours from Brazil, Argentina, and Chile, Peru reinforced the CIA’s continent-wide counterinsurgency network. Of course, the military government’s true purpose had always been to serve a protracted, and distracting, counterinsurgency function. As Renique observed, “the military needed to step in and impose a solution to the crisis of the oligarchic state, one that fused together national development and security objectives in a way that closely corresponded with John F. Kennedy’s hemispheric prescription for the containment of Cuba’s revolutionary contagion.”³²⁹

³²⁵ Nieto, *Masters of War*, 193.

³²⁶ Palmer, *The Shining Path of Peru*, 12.

³²⁷ Gill, *The School of the Americas*, 80.

³²⁸ McSherry, *Predatory States*, 130.

³²⁹ Renique, “‘People’s War,’ ‘Dirty War,’” 322.

Over time, the Kennedy-inspired origins of Peru's counterinsurgency apparatus were forgotten with the emergence of the Sendero Luminosa (Shining Path) Maoist insurgency in the 1980s, and the U.S.-inspired War on Drugs in the 1990s. The brutal nature of the conflict that characterized the Peruvian civil war in the 1980s "offered an expedient formula through which responsibility for the extreme violence of the war could be attributed to the authoritarianism of the Sendero, as a force that was imagined to have developed independently of the equally lethal strategies and counterinsurgency doctrines embraced by the Peruvian military." According to Gerardo Renique, the popular narrative of Sendero as the engine of violence in Peru "minimize[s] the pivotal role played by the counterinsurgency in creating a situation in which the state used fear to normalize and further its own violence."³³⁰ Echoing this claim, Nelson Manrique wrote:

The military implemented a counterinsurgency strategy based on the indiscriminate use of terror against the peasantry. This merciless campaign of repression, guided by the North American counterinsurgency doctrine absorbed by Peruvian military personnel in the schools of Fort Gulick and Panama, tried to isolate Shining Path by demonstrating that the army could exert even greater terror than the guerrillas.³³¹

As the war against the Sendero insurgency continued, the United States found other angles for penetration of counterinsurgency objectives into Peru's bureaucracy, and a terrific source of plausible denial, in the allocation of funds for the War on Drugs. "The U.S. presence in Peru in relation to the drug war dates from the time...[of] the construction of the largest U.S. base in Latin America, the Santa Lucia, in 1988." According to Abderrahman Beggar, "in the view of both the U.S. and Peruvian governments, the drug war made cooperation with the massive

³³⁰ Renique, "'People's War,' 'Dirty War,'" 312.

³³¹ Nelson Manrique, "The War for Central Sierra" in, Steve J. Stern, ed., *Shining and Other Paths: War and Society in Peru, 1980-1995* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 193.

militarization of Peruvian society necessary. It was also used as an excuse to eliminate all the forces considered 'subversive' and 'revolutionary.'”³³² Jonathan Marshall concurs, writing “the U.S. push for narcotics enforcement in Peru...has evolved into a counterinsurgency campaign. The main targets in this case are the fanatical Maoist guerrillas of Sendero Luminosa.”³³³ Constantly adapting to different environments and political situations, the American counterinsurgency experiment was yet again successful in installing its prerogatives in Peru.

³³² Abderrahman Beggar, “The Path of State Terror in Peru,” in *When States Kill*, 257.

³³³ Jonathan Marshall, *Drug Wars: Corruption, Counterinsurgency and Covert Operations in the Third World* (Forestville: Cohan & Cohen, 1991), 24.

Chapter XII

Brazil

The continuation of U.S. support for police-state dictatorships found an especially convenient home in Brazil. Of all American covert operations in South America during the Kennedy administration, Brazil was an especially important base-of-operations for the continent-wide campaign to eliminate internal threats of subversion. Signaling the trend toward fascist totalitarian dictatorships in the Southern Cone, “formal democracy broke down and was replaced by military rule in a domino effect that originated in Brazil in 1964,” comments professor of political sociology Luis Roniger, “where it signaled the defeat of the legacy of populist mobilization and radicalization.”³³⁴

Brazil’s descent into a fascist police-state had a direct lineage to American influence in the post-World War II era. As welcoming recipients of Nazis during Operation Paperclip, the Brazilian government was equally enthusiastic when offered massive amounts of foreign assistance from the Kennedy administration, which happened to be earmarked by OPS for police training. Beginning in 1957 and continuing with Kennedy and the OPS, as professor Alfred McCoy stated, the United States trained over 100,000 Brazilian police officers through the auspices of the Office of Public Safety funding schema.³³⁵ Under JFK, Latin American countries were showered with military hardware, new training facilities, and intelligence advisers - all contained within aid packages dispersed under the banner of Kennedy’s Alliance for Progress. Brazil is instructive in this regard and exemplifies the strong American commitment to creating

³³⁴ Luis Roniger, “US Hemispheric Hegemony and the Descent into Genocidal Practices in Latin America” in, *State Violence and Genocide in Latin America*, 29.

³³⁵ McCoy, *A Question of Torture*, 60.

militarized proxy police forces tasked with counterinsurgency, which in South America eventually devolved into the systematic anti-civilian terror of Operation Condor.

Fascist dictatorship was not inevitable in Brazil. The Kennedy administration irrevocably altered the course of Brazilian politics and encouraged and set-in-motion the police-state. When Joao Goulart assumed the Brazilian presidency in 1961, “he set out an agenda of land reform, restrictions on the annual profits that could be taken out of the country, and the extension of democratic rights and the legalization of the Communist Party.” According to historian David Schmitz, “American officials treated his coming to power as a crisis. The embassy defended the military’s efforts to prevent Goulart from taking office.” Favouring the police-military bureaucracy they had been helping to build, “Kennedy agreed with the advice of the American embassy in Rio that the United States refrain from issuing a statement supporting constitutional process versus a military solution.”³³⁶ Professor Schmitz recounts that by December of 1962, “to counter Goulart, contacts with the military were increased and planning begun for the overthrow of the government.” In blatant disregard of the Alliance for Progress narrative of civic action and economic assistance as a non-violent, non-revolutionary pathway to democracy, “military aid and the shipment of military supplies were increased throughout 1962 and 1963, but all other assistance to the central government was ended.”³³⁷

A military coup in 1964, led by General Castelo Branco, ushered in a tortuous twenty-one-year dictatorship. As president, Branco immediately removed many democratic guarantees and centralized and amalgamated military and police powers. He also unleashed a brutal counterinsurgency campaign, Operacao Limpeza [Cleanup], against the people of Brazil:

³³⁶ Schmitz, *Thank God They're on Our Side*, 269.

³³⁷ Schmitz, *Thank God They're on Our Side*, 271-2.

In the streets, where police and military dragnets carried out the cleanup, there were broad searches and seizures and mass arrests. By the end of the first week after the military coup, more than 7,000 people had been taken into custody in Brazil. After another three months, as many as 50,000 people had been arrested.³³⁸

In a “countrywide purge to eliminate ‘subversives’ from Brazil’s political and administrative systems,” Operation Cleanup, “moved like a tidal wave across Brazil,” wrote professor Martha Huggins. With the success of Branco’s purge, “10,000 civil servants were banished from office, 122 military officers forced to retire, and 378 political and intellectual leaders stripped of citizenship rights.” Throughout the purge, “OPS police advisors worked closely with special military and police inquiry committees, the notorious ‘IPMS [Inquerito Policial Militar] of subversion,’” which was established “to process Operation Cleanup arrests.” According to Huggins “this gave U.S. advisors, especially in Brazil’s most important cities, a chance to obtain intelligence from police operations.”³³⁹ These initial displays of repression by Brazil’s military dictatorship, with complete approval from the United States, would be the foundation for several decades of protracted counterinsurgency operations spanning the entire South American continent.

As individual rights were whittled away in stages by a series of Institutional Acts enacted by the military government, the Brazilian authorities moved further to centralize the police-state for more efficient population control. “Operacao Bandeirantes (OBAN) was secretly established in Sao Paulo city on July 2, 1969, to be applied nationally in 1970 as a new internal security organization” explains Huggins. “Because of the way OBAN was structured and operated, it has

³³⁸ Martha K. Huggins, Mika Haritos-Fatouros & Philip G. Zimbardo, *Violence Workers: Police Torturers and Murderers Reconstruct Brazilian Atrocities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 64.

³³⁹ Huggins, *Political Policing*, 120-2.

been described as a pilot Vietnam-style Phoenix program for Latin America.” Bandeirantes would closely follow Phoenix, which “carried out its mission through interrogation, intimidation, torture, disappearances, and murder.” Learning from the mistakes of Phoenix, OBAN staff maneuvered to distance the program from the culpability of operating on OPS funds. Bandeirantes “was extraofficial and privatized, financed through local businessmen and national and multinational corporations, among them Ford and General Motors.”³⁴⁰

Despite clever attempts to protect the true source of their political power, the military dictatorship in Brazil continued to be trained, guided and coordinated by American advisers, year after year. According to professor Jeremy Kuzmarov, as an anchor of U.S. interests in the region, the Office of Public Safety in Brazil:

Was headed by ‘Jack’ Goin, a forensics expert with long experience in Southeast Asia; Frank Jessup, a counterintelligence specialist who had trained internal security forces on five continents; and Theodore Brown, who had helped run the Phoenix program in Vietnam...other advisers included Yale graduate Norman Rosner and Indiana state trooper Albert Bryant, both Vietnam veterans; Fred Zumwalt of the Phoenix Police Department; and Robert L. Barnes, a U.S. Border Patrol agent and police legal affairs officer during the occupation of Japan.³⁴¹

According to Kuzmarov, these men “epitomize the continuity in OPS programs and the way novel techniques were being refined in one place and then redeployed elsewhere in the world.” Because of their contributions, “collectively they helped to set up Brazil’s intelligence service and oversaw Operation Bandeirantes, a model for the Phoenix program [in South Vietnam] in its strategy of dismantling the leftist opposition through skilled intelligence work and selective

³⁴⁰ Huggins, *Political Policing*, 150-2.

³⁴¹ Kuzmarov, *Modernizing Repression*, 225.

assassination.”³⁴² In Brazil as in countless other nations in the Third World, the continuity of American counterinsurgency personnel and doctrine over time is undeniable.

A result of their position relative to America’s counterinsurgency strategy, the twenty-year dictatorship in Brazil was marked by extremes of psychological warfare and terror, with the civilian population under constant threat of abduction, interrogation, torture, and extrajudicial execution at the hands of police, paramilitaries and death squads. A 1972 Amnesty International report contends the “ruling Brazilian groups seem to have accepted the physical elimination of criminals (*marginais*) and of political adversaries considered dangerous.” The report adds “they have thus apparently allowed the creation of death squads and torture centers.”³⁴³

Psywar, or psyops, a foundational aspect of American counterinsurgency doctrine, was a key aspect of this program. Amnesty International outlines the “reasons for torture,” as the Brazilian government, through the arm of the police, “employ torture as a means of intimidation, in order to control the thoughts and will of people. Many are defeated by the fear of torture and accept situations which are offensive to their human dignity.” Those in power “can then ignore all laws and rights with confidence that the public will not dare to register any protest.”³⁴⁴ In the final remarks of the report, Amnesty International concludes, “in Brazil, torture is not the expression of a passing crisis or a single scandalous phenomenon, but is an integral part of the political system which affects a growing proportion of the population.” Where, it is said, in urban areas “approximately one family in three has been affected by repression: disappearance or imprisonment of a member of the family, blackmail, pressure, persecution of all sorts.”³⁴⁵

³⁴² Kuzmarov, *Modernizing Repression*, *ibid.*

³⁴³ Amnesty International, *Report on Allegations of Torture in Brazil* (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1976), 65.

³⁴⁴ Amnesty, *Report on Allegations of Torture in Brazil*, 64.

³⁴⁵ Amnesty, *Report on Allegations of Torture in Brazil*, 70.

Incubated in Brazil, the model of the fascist police-state dictatorship would export itself through military coups, militarized police, and cross-continental intelligence coordination. American intelligence would ensure collaboration between Brazilian counterinsurgency experts and partners in neighbouring Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay and Bolivia. Brazil became a center for intelligence coordination, police training, and extrajudicial operations for the entire South American continent. Later subsumed under the rubric of the CIA's Operation Condor, these fascist governments, whose power was based on perpetual counterinsurgency warfare, were collectively responsible for some of the most depraved and horrific crimes of the 20th century. "The Brazilian military junta that seized power in 1964," explains professor Patrice McSherry, "created a secret intelligence apparatus, assisted by the CIA, called the *Servico Nacional de Informacoes*. This powerful intelligence organ and its associated paramilitary groups were exceptional in the region because they became semiautonomous and occasionally acted to derail the political program of the military government itself through acts of terror."³⁴⁶ Because the South American intelligence networks and their associated goons were directly overseen by the CIA, the United States, of course, had privy to information which the fascist puppet regimes in their service did not possess. Using Brazil as a conduit, the CIA would spread this formula of control and clandestine governance to other Latin American nations.

In her study of Operation Condor, professor McSherry found that "Brazil became a major counterrevolutionary force and U.S. ally in South America. Brazil offered training in repressive methods, including torture, to other militaries in the 1960s." Furthermore, "intelligence officers from other Latin American countries came to three Brazilian bases for training in counter guerrilla warfare, 'interrogation techniques,' and methods of repression."³⁴⁷ With the

³⁴⁶ McSherry, *Predatory States*, 70.

³⁴⁷ McSherry, *Predatory States*, 53.

direction, assistance, and encouragement of the United States, counterinsurgency was taught in this manner to the various intelligence agencies and counterinsurgency forces of Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia and Paraguay.

In Paraguay, the dictatorship of Alfredo Stroessner, which ruled from 1954 to 1989, “became a center of political repression even before Condor.” In their essay on the Latin American interstate intelligence network, Cecilia Mejivar and Nestor Rodriguez wrote:

No method was too vile for Stroessner to manage his political functionaries or to punish his enemies. Receiving U.S. support for his anticommunism...and Brazilian training in counterinsurgency for his military officers and police agents, Stroessner wiped out political opposition...with Stroessner’s strong-arm control, Paraguay became an ideal center for transnational operations to detain, torture, and eliminate political targets.³⁴⁸

To the south in Uruguay, the indoctrination of military and police forces by American and Brazilian instructors prepared yet another counterinsurgency regime in the service of the CIA’s Operation Condor. “While the money and materiel provided by the United States was certainly important, most observers point to the foreign training received by the Uruguayan security forces as the most significant external determinant of their transformation from a democratic to a dictatorial orientation” commented professor of political science Jeffrey Ryan. “The vast majority of this training was carried out by the United States, although Brazilian and Argentinian personnel were thought to have provided some of the more nefarious instruction, particularly in torture techniques.”³⁴⁹

³⁴⁸ Cecilia Menjivar & Nestor Rodriguez, “State Terror in the U.S.-Latin American Interstate Regime” in, *When States Kill*, 16.

³⁴⁹ Jeffrey A. Ryan, “Turning on Their Masters: State Terrorism and Unlearning Democracy in Uruguay” in, *When States Kill*, 283.

This certainly wasn't true in the case of Dan Mitrione, a CIA agent who trained the Uruguayan police in the finer points of torture. After Mitrione was captured and executed by Tupamaros guerrillas, the sordid details of this "family man" began to emerge. For his training exercises, Mitrione abducted homeless people to demonstrate torture techniques to his Uruguayan students. According to one of his apprentices, Cuban Manuel Hevia Cosculluela, "Mitrione had tortured four beggars to death with electric shocks at a 1970 seminar to demonstrate his techniques for Uruguayan police trainees."³⁵⁰ Philip Agee famously resigned from "the Agency" and subsequently wrote his expose, *Inside the Company*, after his revulsion to CIA torture-training in Uruguay.³⁵¹

Operation Condor was an innovation in international counterinsurgency policing. The experience gained in Southeast Asia would guide U.S. policymakers in Latin America, as they did not abandon the practices of programs like South Vietnam's Operation Phoenix, but instead, simply modified their clandestine function. This would lead Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger to feel confident in their denial of involvement in the ousting of freely-elected Marxist Salvador Allende of Chile in September 1973. Again, the intelligence network of Condor, with Brazil as the anchor nation, would carry out the transition to General Augusto Pinochet's military regime. "The CIA station chief used his contacts with the SNI [Brazilian intelligence] to enlist Brazilian collaboration in the formation and training of DINA [Chilean intelligence]." Patrice McSherry shows that "Brazilian intelligence officers trained DINA personnel in communications, organization, interrogation, and torture to the express request of the CIA, and DINA used SNI as an organizational model."³⁵² The international character of the Condor program was

³⁵⁰ McCoy, *A Question of Torture*, 72. A.J. Langguth also writes in detail about Mitrione in *Hidden Terrors*.

³⁵¹ Philip Agee, *Inside the Company: CIA Diary* (Markham: Penguin Books, 1975). Kuzmarov also references this, in, *Modernizing Repression*, 228-9.

³⁵² McSherry, *Predatory States*, 71.

demonstrated during the coup against Allende. Once again, Brazil functioned as an injection of counterinsurgency expertise. “Brazilian officers took part in the seizure of Brazilian exiles living in Santiago at the time of the coup and carried out interrogation and torture in the stadium where thousands of Chileans and exiles were rounded up.” McSherry reports that “other Brazilian exiles reported later that they were interrogated and tortured by Brazilians after the coups in Bolivia (1971), Chile (1973), and Argentina (1976).”³⁵³

Through the lens of American propaganda, the so-called “Brazilian miracle” was touted as a positive example of Latin American modernity, economic expansion, and prosperity. In truth, Brazil was the foundational nation in the CIA’s widely repressive, continent-wide Condor counterinsurgency force. For most Brazilians, their miracle would not come until 1985, with the dismantling of the twenty-one-year, U.S.-sponsored, police-state dictatorship.

³⁵³ McSherry, *Predatory States*, 57.

Chapter XIII

Guyana

In Peru, as in Guatemala, racial tensions between landowners of European and of mixed-racial descent, and peasants of Indigenous background, were manipulated by colonizing powers to contribute to conflict and bloodshed. The United States, becoming more experienced at divide-and-rule tactics and the weaponization of culture, found an opportune theater for these schemes in Guyana, or formerly, British Guiana. “Racial difference was central to the colony’s construction and existence,” writes Colin Palmer, “and white supremacy stood at its ideological core.”³⁵⁴ Racial animosity between people of East Indian and African descent had been strategically manufactured by the British, and, from 1961-1963, the Kennedy administration would use this same imperial architecture for its own purposes.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill was not pleased when, in 1953, Cheddi Jagan of the People’s Progressive Party (PPP) came to power as the first freely-elected Chief Minister of British Guiana. The language of the PPP platform and manifesto were interpreted as “Marxist” by Churchill and the Tory government. Immediately, the newly formed Jagan government was suspended, as was the constitution of British Guiana. Many members of the PPP, including Cheddi Jagan and his American wife, Janet, were arrested and detained. “For the next three years,” explains historian Barry Sukhram, “British Guiana was ruled under emergency powers by the British governor and appointed officials, and the Jagans were kept under house arrest and strict surveillance.”³⁵⁵ Notably, Jagan’s Minister of Education and Britain’s favoured Afro-

³⁵⁴ Colin A. Palmer. *Cheddi Jagan and the Politics of Power: British Guiana’s Struggle for Independence* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 233.

³⁵⁵ Barry L. Sukhram, *Divide and Conquer: The Split in the People’s Progressive Party of British Guiana and the Cold War* (Hertfordshire: Hansib Publications, 2013), 88.

Guyanese political figure, Forbes Burnham, was not arrested or detained. Sukhram notes, “when Jagan was restricted, Burnham was not, and when later the latter was placed under restriction and refused to report to the police as he was ordered to do, the police failed to prosecute him.”³⁵⁶

In 1964, Jessie Forbes cautioned “beware, I say, my Brother Forbes. His motto is, the personal ends to power justify any means used to achieve them. His bible is *The Prince* by Machiavelli. And we the people, should he come to power, will be only pawns in his endless game of self-advancement.”³⁵⁷ As the Churchill government fostered a split in the PPP, it chose Forbes Burnham “to lead the PPP into safe and respectable channels.”³⁵⁸ With encouragement from powerful allies, Burnham broke away from the PPP to form the People’s National Congress (PNC), thus initiating the racialization of politics in Guyana. The remains of the British Empire had once again employed divide-and-rule as an effective strategy of control.

Cheddi Jagan would not pander to these tactics, and said in 1966, “race has never been a serious problem. Indians and Negroes for many years have played, worked and lived together amicably.” Jagan was centered out for neutralization precisely because, unlike Forbes, he refused to operate for power within the imperial paradigm. “The fact is that race and religion have been used by the colonialists to divide and rule and to blur the basic issues,” said Jagan. “The main issues in British Guiana are the struggle for national liberation from colonialism and imperialism and the struggle of the workers and farmers for freedom from exploitation by the capitalists and landlords.”³⁵⁹ Unfortunately, Jagan’s uncompromising ethics, and the language he used to express them, led to a situation where, “by the 1960s, Britain’s spies worried that the Jagans

³⁵⁶ Sukhram, *Divide and Conquer*, 55.

³⁵⁷ Cheddi Jagan, *The West on Trial: My Fight for Guyana’s Freedom* (Kent: Michael Joseph, 1966), 441.

³⁵⁸ Sukhram, *Divide and Conquer*, 56.

³⁵⁹ Jagan, *The West on Trial*, 334.

would turn to newly communist Cuba, possibly making the country a base for Latin American revolutionaries.”³⁶⁰

Jagan was elected again as premier of British Guiana in 1961. The Kennedy administration, while initiating a much larger role in British Guiana, was highly skeptical of Jagan’s integrity and motivations. Following the British, the Americans immediately classified Jagan as a Marxist fit for extralegal removal from office. Much like the British, Kennedy and his foreign policy advisers were driven by racist sensibilities and a worldview informed by a hierarchy of race. Historian Stephen Rabe explains that “by implication, Cheddi Jagan and his countrymen lacked the drive and insight of whites,” because “U.S. officials perceived Indians as failing to meet Western standards of manliness.” This was part of a general notion that “Indian men were not Cold Warriors because they were passive, emotional, and lacked heterosexual energy.” Professor Rabe reports “U.S. officials did indeed refer to the Indians of Guyana as being ‘timid’ and ‘docile’. Unlike ‘aggressive’ blacks, they allegedly lacked the physical stamina to be police officers.”³⁶¹ Inspired by notions of a racial hierarchy, Jagan, of Indian decent, was perceived by Kennedy acolytes as weak, naïve, and unable to withstand communist subversion.³⁶²

There were yet other dimensions to Kennedy’s intrigues, as Colin Palmer commented on a “Machiavellianism that had characterized America’s attitude toward Cheddi Jagan and its policy

³⁶⁰ Sukhram, *Divide and Conquer*, 89.

³⁶¹ Stephen G. Rabe, *U.S. Intervention in British Guiana: A Cold War Story* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 182-3.

³⁶² At the time of the Mexican-American War, “To sow the seeds of freedom and republicanism over an ever-widening area was not enough to secure world progress, because Americans now believed that these seeds were falling on barren ground. Most peoples, they believed, lacked the innate abilities to take advantage of free institutions. Some races were doomed to permanent inferiority, some to extinction.” Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 229; Rabe makes note of this factor and similarly references: Michael H. Hunt, “The Hierarchy of Race”, in *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

in British Guiana since 1961, when it began to take an active interest in the affairs of the colony.”³⁶³ It was no mistake that the Kennedy administration’s heightened interest in British Guiana coincided with the election of Jagan. Once again, like the British before them, the United States chose Forbes Burnham, a demagogic, violent-prone black nationalist, as a replacement.

In Washington in May of 1962, “Forbes Burnham met with thirteen U.S. officials at their invitation.” Palmer wrote that to ingratiate himself with his American hosts, Burnham “said he knew ‘from personal experience’ that the PPP received ‘instructions via the international communist movement’ up to 1955, when he left the party.” He also informed them “that there were several communists in the leadership of the PPP and that these individuals had close ties with Cuba.” Never one to neglect an opportunity to advance himself, “Burnham assured the Americans that the PNC supported free enterprise.”³⁶⁴

The CIA would advance the political career of Forbes Burnham through a dual strategy of inflaming racial tensions and fomenting labour strife, which was manifested in a series of riots from 1961 to 1963 aimed at destabilizing and discrediting the Jagan government. “Covert activities by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had helped to stimulate the unrest” explains Palmer, “by exploiting racial sentiment for political gain, the Guianese leaders were crudely manipulating their followers.”³⁶⁵ Taking a page from both the Marshall Plan and the overthrow of Mossadegh in Iran, the CIA also deployed it’s conduit for the international sabotage of the labour movement, the AFL-CIO, in an effort to disrupt the Guyanese economy. Professor Rabe wrote “the [pro-Burnham] Afro-Guyanese strikers were sustained by a massive strike fund, estimated to be over \$1 million, provided by the CIA through the AFL-CIO. Union

³⁶³ Palmer, *Cheddi Jagan and the Politics of Power*, 242.

³⁶⁴ Palmer, *Cheddi Jagan and the Politics of Power*, 262.

³⁶⁵ Palmer, *Cheddi Jagan and the Politics of Power*, 233.

president George Meany surreptitiously deposited funds in the Royal Bank of Canada.”³⁶⁶

Palmer agrees that “the strike that paralyzed the colony in 1963 was abetted by the AFL-CIO, which served as the organization through which the CIA funneled money to the Guianese unions,” the CIA, via the AFL-CIO, “were providing \$125,000 weekly for strike relief in 1963.”³⁶⁷ Using “soft” counterinsurgency tactics, these efforts were incredibly successful in weakening and delegitimizing the Jagan government.

Inflated by his American backers, during the twilight of Jagan’s time in office, “Burnham repeatedly boasted that he controlled the levers of power in Georgetown.” Rabe describes how Burnham “organized huge mobs, made incendiary statements to the mobs, and then declined to stop their rampages...the Jagan government could not control the mobs, because the police force did not respond to his commands.” This was because “virtually all police officers were Afro-Guyanese.” Burnham would not have gained power without the backing of the United States, as “the CIA aided and abetted the rioters. The Kennedy administration had decided to generate chaos in the colony.”³⁶⁸ Conforming to the pattern of other American counterinsurgency experiments, the Guyanese police under Forbes Burnham rapidly became the fearsome and lawless arm of his U.S.-sponsored puppet-regime.

The further polarization of Guyanese politics along racial lines was continually fomented and enabled by the United States. The Burnham dictatorship consolidated itself around a huge investment in the growth of Guyana as a modernized “security” state, or, in other words, a police-state. This was exactly what Burnham’s American benefactors desired. During his twenty-one-year rule, from 1964 to 1985, Forbes Burnham:

³⁶⁶ Rabe, *U.S. Intervention in British Guiana*, 112.

³⁶⁷ Palmer, *Cheddi Jagan and the Politics of Power*, 252.

³⁶⁸ Rabe, *U.S. Intervention in British Guiana*, 90-1.

Relied on security forces and the civil service to preserve his dictatorship. After 1964, Burnham rapidly expanded the size of the security forces in Guyana. In 1964, British Guiana had approximately 2,000 police and soldiers. By 1980, the number of armed personnel exceeded 20,000, with 4,500 in the police force and 7,500 in the Guyana Defense Force. Another 8,000 belonged to paramilitary groups...[who were] especially vicious, inflicting a reign of terror on Indians. Known in Guyana as “kick-down-the-door gangs,” these armed units employed commando tactics in invading Indian homes. The gangs robbed family members, assaulted the males, and raped women and young girls.³⁶⁹

The rise of the police-state in Guyana followed a pattern established earlier in Brazil, the largest American-backed regime in Latin America. Yet, these police were not assigned to fight crime, instead, they would assist paramilitaries and thugs in terrorizing, assaulting, and robbing the Guyanese people. Despite the influx of police during Burnham’s dictatorship, by 1980, Guyana had the second highest rate of crime in the world, surpassed only by Lebanon.³⁷⁰

The Guyanese police, like all counterinsurgency police forces, indiscriminately targeted the civilian population in its entirety. Under Burnham, the police were also tasked with eliminating anyone who challenged the established political order. When Rastafarian-Marxist scholar Walter Rodney, of Afro-Guyanese descent, returned from Tanzania preaching cross-racial harmony and class solidarity, “he was assassinated by a young agent who was paid to gain his confidence.”³⁷¹ In June of 1980, a bomb planted inside a walkie-talkie cut Rodney’s life short. In death, Burnham feared Rodney’s unifying power as a martyr of the working class and the Rastafari; in July of 1980, “like the slave masters who banned the use of the drum” writes professor Horace

³⁶⁹ Rabe, *U.S. Intervention in British Guiana*, 163.

³⁷⁰ Rabe, *U.S. Intervention in British Guiana*, 163.

³⁷¹ Horace Campbell, *Rasta and Resistance: From Marcus Garvey to Walter Rodney* (Dar Es Salaam: Africa World Press, 1985), 173. Rodney, seen as a subversive threat by many governments, was banned from Jamaica in 1968 for activism amongst the Rastafarian population, 153. He is author of the seminal work: Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London: Bogle-L’Ouverture Publications, 1972).

Campbell, “the Guyanese government banned reggae music from the airwaves.”³⁷² Rodney, a disciple of C.L.R. James, and a highly respected political figure in Africa and the Caribbean, made the mistake of directly challenging the rule of Forbes Burnham. Despite being continually harassed and arrested while doing political work throughout the country in 1979-1980, “Rodney felt compelled to confront the Burnham regime in the same way that he was calling on the working people to do.”³⁷³

Ex-State Department official William Blum noted “when it was time, in 1994, for the US government to declassify its British Guiana documents under the 30-year rule, the State Department and CIA refused to do so,” perhaps because, Blum adds “one of the better-off countries in the region 30 years ago, Guyana in 1994 was among the poorest. Its principle export was people.”³⁷⁴ While insignificant in a geostrategic sense, Guyana was still important enough to warrant the attention of U.S. policymakers. Outside of the normal boundaries of global attention, Guyana was a perfect opportunity for the CIA to practice “soft” techniques of counterinsurgency, the weaponization of culture, police-state terror and social engineering out-of-view from any discerning observation.

³⁷² Campbell, *Rasta and Resistance*, 171.

³⁷³ Rupert Charles Lewis, *Walter Rodney's Intellectual and Political Thought* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), 243.

³⁷⁴ William Blum, *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Intervention Since World War II* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1998), 113-4. For more on the Clinton-era efforts to block the declassification of documents related to CIA destabilization campaigns in Guyana, see: John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York: Oxford University Press), 186.

Chapter XIV

Thailand

Of the endless number of studies covering various aspects of the American war in Vietnam, few acknowledge to any extent the involvement and importance of Thailand to the United States. As the main U.S. ally in Southeast Asia, Thailand is often overshadowed in the historical record by the secret war in Laos and the internecine purges in Cambodia. In fact, Thailand was an integral strategic outpost for America during the Vietnam War era. As a friendly and openly receptive partner, Thailand was the main base and staging-ground for a host of U.S. counterinsurgency initiatives.

The secret war in Laos, revealed to the public by *The Pentagon Papers*, should be rightfully remembered as the secret war in Thailand and Laos. Author Zalin Grant stated correctly “the key to keeping the operation secret was found not in Laos but in Thailand.”³⁷⁵ As former CIA Chief of Station for Laos, Douglas Blaufarb, points out “Thailand was placed on the first list of countries whose situations were to be followed by the Special Group (C.I.) and from this initial decision there stemmed a regular flow of reporting and program activity.” Blaufarb acknowledges the subversive threat in Thailand was, at best, minimal, as “at the time, no overt violence was evident” and “the Thai Communists were considered to be a tiny handful” who “had no capability to effect the somnolent political life of Bangkok.” Regardless of these factors, “the insurgency in Thailand was signaled and the signals were noted in the embryonic stage. Actions considered suitable to the threat were rapidly launched, well ahead of any serious crisis.” An overexaggerated response and the significant increase of U.S. military assistance and training

³⁷⁵ Zalin Grant, *Facing the Phoenix* (New York: WW Norton, 1991), 148.

was justified because, according to Blaufarb, “Thailand was a place where a test was possible of the view that early prophylactic action is the secret of successful counterinsurgency.”³⁷⁶

This “early prophylactic action,” as Blaufarb calls it, began at a much earlier date than the Kennedy administration’s clandestine forays into Laos. “William Donovan, the former head of the OSS, had served as ambassador to Thailand in the early nineteen fifties,” wrote Grant, “and the CIA had developed warm relations with the Thais.” Grant found “the CIA had been particularly effective at helping the Thais create a strong border police,” which, in turn, were used “to enter Laos secretly and serve as radio operators, training cadre, and support troops for Vang Pao’s” CIA procured Hmong army.³⁷⁷

Blaufarb’s replacement in Laos, Ted Shackley, also heavily endorsed Thailand as a base of operations for counterinsurgency activities throughout all Southeast Asia. Washington “had hit on the idea that if the secret war worked so well, then add more money and people and it will do that much better.” Biographer David Corn wrote that “Shackley ordered the construction in Udorn of a million-dollar, two-story concrete headquarters with state-of-the-art communications” and that “Shackley poured people into the Udorn base.”³⁷⁸ The airbase at Udorn was a multi-use facility which served as a communications hub, and a center for the coordination and training of “nativized” mercenary counterinsurgency units, specifically Vang Pao’s Hmong army. Udorn, used by CIA-proprietary airlines Civil Air Transport and Air America, was also the epicenter of the CIA-Hmong opium traffic that funded a large portion of the secret war.

In addition to the opium trade, the United States government also found ways to fund the Thai military, police, and their surrogates without revealing their role in Laos. Kennedy’s civic action

³⁷⁶ Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era*, 169.

³⁷⁷ Grant, *Facing the Phoenix*, 148-9.

³⁷⁸ Corn, *Blond Ghost*, 136-7.

programs came to the fore in a pronounced way. Alexander Caldwell noticed that “aid increased much more rapidly than normal AID procedures would have permitted, to the extent that the absorptive capacities of recipient agencies were seriously strained.” Caldwell proposed it was “somewhat unlikely that American concern for insurgency in Thailand would have been the sole, or even the primary, reason” for the massive increase in U.S. foreign assistance.³⁷⁹ Robert Muscat concurs with this view, writing “the U.S. aid program in Thailand was marked by a sharp rise in the level of economic and military resources the United States provided to Thailand.” Muscat explains the increase in aid represented “the highest levels of resource transfer reached at any time in the program’s history before or since.” Despite the professed civic-action orientation of AID programs in this period, “the security-oriented projects got the lion’s share of the funds during this period,” and “security in one form or another had been a, if not the, basic rationale and justification to the Congress since the start of the program.”³⁸⁰

With crucial guidance and contributions from the United States, the Thai military and police were built into one of the most well-trained, equipped, and technologically advanced counterinsurgency forces in the world. Ralph McGehee, a CIA officer who was assigned to work with the hill-tribes of the northern Thai highlands in the early 1960s, recalls that:

In Thailand in the 1960s the Agency continued its involvement with the Police Aerial Reconnaissance Unit and the Border Patrol Police. Those counterinsurgency forces then supplied much of the manpower for the secret war in Laos. The CIA also developed a series of internal security and counterinsurgency programs jointly with Thai security forces.³⁸¹

³⁷⁹ J. Alexander Caldwell, *American Economic Aid to Thailand* (Toronto: Lexington Books, 1974), 51.

³⁸⁰ Robert J. Muscat, *Thailand and the United States: Development, Security, and Foreign Aid* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 149-50.

³⁸¹ McGehee, *Deadly Deceits*, 58.

Ted Shackley, CIA Chief of Station for Laos and then Saigon, concurs with McGehee. Speaking of the CIA's secret Hmong army, Shackley stated that by March 1961:

This force had expanded to 4,000 men, Understandably the CIA wanted to keep a low profile in Laos, so arrangements were made for members of an elite police unit from neighboring Thailand to help train the Meo [Hmong]. The Thai instructors taught the Meo map reading, tactics, demolitions, and the use of their American-supplied weapons. These irregular warfare experts were later enlarged by Royal Thai Army personnel. Without these instructors, Meo resistance, which started with 4,000 men and grew to over 25,000, would never have become a reality.³⁸²

As a key component of the American clandestine war in Laos against the insurgent Pathet Lao, the Thai police and military were also instrumental in wider U.S. operations in Burma, Cambodia and Vietnam. The Thai Border Patrol Police (BPP) and the Police Aerial Reconnaissance Unit (PARU) would be relied upon repeatedly as the most proficient "nativized" U.S. counterinsurgency force in Southeast Asia.³⁸³

The Thai Border Patrol Police were integral to the formulation of the "civic-action as counterinsurgency" model. The building of roads, schools, and other public works by the BPP were a cover for an anti-subversive agenda. "The primary goal of this kind of BPP activity was not economical or social development," states Caldwell, "rather, it was specifically the gathering of information" where, "the intent was to set up a network of village informers." Construction of schools in rural areas had "important implications for long-term nation-building in the sense of

³⁸² Theodore Shackley, *The Third Option: An American View of Counterinsurgency Operations* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981), 122. It should be noted that at the time of the Vietnam War, the Hmong were referred to incorrectly as Meo by many Americans.

³⁸³ "The Police Aerial Reconnaissance Unit (PARU), an elite airborne formation within the Thai Border Patrol Police...had a long, close association with the CIA...PARU commandos, acting as covert mobile training teams, had been conducting CIA-sponsored cross-border operations in Laos since 1960." Kenneth Conboy, *The Cambodian Wars: Clashing Armies and CIA Covert Operations* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2013), 54.

spreading the symbols of Thai nationhood to minority groups,” but more importantly, it provided seemingly benign methods “to facilitating tactical intelligence gathering.” Above all, the AID programs had “emphasized particularly heavily the augmentation of the number of policemen actually on duty.” This meant that Thai National Police recruitment increased from 1,600 in 1965 to 12,500 in 1969; the number of police stations rose from 150 in 1965 to 1,004 in 1970; and overall Thai National Police manpower grew from 50,000 in 1964 to 74,000 in 1970.³⁸⁴

Perhaps most important, Thai police counterinsurgency units played an integral function in the CIA’s opium trafficking supply-chain. Initiated by French counterinsurgent Roger Trinquier, the intelligence-opium networks of Southeast Asia were a huge source of financing for the CIA’s secret war in Laos. Upon discovering “Operation X” in 1953, Edward Lansdale protested Trinquier’s role in the opium traffic. However, “the CIA’s director, Allen Dulles, was mightily impressed by Trinquier’s operation and, looking ahead to the time when the US would take over from the French in the region, began funneling money, guns, and CIA advisers to Trinquier’s Hmong army.”³⁸⁵

Later, under Kennedy and Johnson, “the CIA used its opium-and-arms smuggling front Sea Supply Corp.” historian Jonathan Marshall explains, “to train the paramilitary Thai Border Patrol Police [BPP] under Gen. Phao Sriyanon. The CIA aimed to mould the BPP into a counterinsurgency asset beholden to Washington rather than the Thai government.” Interestingly, but certainly not by coincidence:

Phao was also the most notorious Thai drug smuggler of his era. The contacts he established through the CIA’s Sea Supply Corp. with the KMT [Kuomintang] opium traffickers allowed him

³⁸⁴ Caldwell, *American Economic Aid to Thailand*, 54-5.

³⁸⁵ Cockburn & St. Clair, “Armies of Addicts: Vietnam and Laos” in, *Whiteout*, 242-3.

to sew up a near-monopoly on Burmese opium exports. His border police escorted drug caravans from the frontier through to Bangkok.³⁸⁶

The CIA's cultivation of powerful drug lords as partners in American counterinsurgency efforts was by no means limited to the endorsement of Phao Sriyanon. As professor Clarence Lusane describes:

During the Vietnam War, the CIA and the U.S. Army supported Vang Pao in Laos. Vang Pao was one of the largest opium dealers in Southeast Asia and a key financier of the 30,000 Hmong tribesmen who were used by the CIA for political and military operations. In 1968, Vang Pao met with U.S. organized crime figure Santo Trafficante, Jr., who was to become the largest importer and distributor of China White heroin in the United States.³⁸⁷

Strongly endorsing America's support for drug cartels as counterinsurgency assets, Ted Shackley expressed the agency's view that a "January 1961 contact by American personnel with a Meo [Hmong] leader, Vang Pao" which initialized his partnership with the CIA, is "a classic example of how foreign instructors can help build an effective fighting force."³⁸⁸

Indeed, the United States went to extraordinary lengths to facilitate the activities of large-scale international drug trafficking-as-counterinsurgency operations. CIA agent Victor Marchetti, in describing the main CIA-proprietary front airline involved in opium and arms trafficking, said:

Air America has trained pilots for the Thai national police...[they] regularly cross national boundaries in Southeast Asia, and its flights are almost never inspected by customs authorities. It has its own separate passenger and freight terminals at airports in South Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand. At Udorn, in Thailand, Air America maintains a large base which is hidden within an even larger U.S. Air Force facility...the Udorn base is used to support virtually all of the "secret"

³⁸⁶ Marshall, *Drug Wars*, 56-7.

³⁸⁷ Clarence Lusane, *Pipe Dream Blues: Racism and the War on Drugs* (Boston: South End Press, 1991), 119.

³⁸⁸ Shackley, *The Third Option*, 121.

war in Laos, and it also houses a “secret” maintenance facility for the planes of the Thai, Cambodian, and Laotian air forces.³⁸⁹

Tried and tested on the battlegrounds of Southeast Asia, clandestine drug and arms trafficking would become a staple of American counterinsurgency funding in the coming decades in Latin America, Central Asia, and the Balkans. Thailand was a critical staging-ground for the initial trial-run of this indispensable aspect of U.S. counterinsurgency strategy.

Other foundational aspects of U.S. counterinsurgency were adapted from the original CIA proxies in Thailand. The Provincial Reconnaissance Units (PRU) of Operation Phoenix, the CIA’s notorious program of abduction, torture, and assassination in South Vietnam, were patterned on the Thai Border Patrol Police and Police Aerial Reconnaissance Units. It is by no accident that CIA Chief of Station for Laos and then Saigon, Ted Shackley, left his imprint on both the Thai BPP and PARU, and then also the PRUs in South Vietnam.

Once again representing the continuity of tactics and personnel within CIA-endorsed counterinsurgency operations, Felix Rodriguez, working for Ted Shackley, immersed himself in the Southeast Asian secret wars as a pilot for the Phoenix program. After training military units in Ecuador and Peru, Rodriguez “volunteered for Vietnam, where he was assigned to be deputy field adviser to Shackley’s PRUs.” Long before flying drugs for Pablo Escobar during the Contra Wars, Rodriguez was a pilot for the death squads of Operation Phoenix. “In Bien Hoa, Rodriguez developed a specialty – using helicopters in tandem with PRUs” wrote Shackley biographer David Corn.³⁹⁰ Orrin DeForest, a CIA interrogator for the Phoenix program, told of how “Felix Rodriguez, our lead pilot, would mark the houses...the other chopper pilots would set down

³⁸⁹ Marchetti & Marks, *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*, 153.

³⁹⁰ Corn, *Blond Ghost*, 215. See also: Joseph J. Trento, *Prelude to Terror: The Rogue CIA and the Legacy of America’s Private Intelligence Network* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2005), 46.

immediately and dump the PRU. They'd round up the people; get them out of the houses and scoop them up."³⁹¹ These people, of course, were being "scooped up" and taken to the various Provincial Interrogation Centers scattered across South Vietnam to be interrogated, tortured, and quite possibly, summarily executed. Constantly field-testing methods of warfare on civilian populations of various nations, Felix Rodriguez and Ted Shackley embody how counterinsurgency doctrine developed and grew in unseen peripheries like Thailand during the Vietnam War era.

Coming full circle via both personnel and strategy, Thailand during the American war in Vietnam was an important laboratory for counterinsurgency experimentation. For the United States, and especially the CIA, Thailand was an ideal space for testing proxy police, psywar, civic action, and clandestine funding schemes - mostly because of the openly receptive Thai government, and the relative lack of international observation and scrutiny. Despite the non-existence of any recognizable threat from an Indigenous insurgency, or perhaps because of it, Thailand was chosen by the United States as a primary base for counterinsurgency operations in Southeast Asia.

³⁹¹ Orrin DeForest & David Chanoff, *Slow Burn: The Rise and Bitter Fall of American Intelligence in Vietnam* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990), 128.

The Legacy of Kennedy's Counterinsurgency Ambition

Without question, the American military-intelligence bureaucracy was well-educated in counterinsurgency warfare long before the Camelot era. In the post-World War II years, the CIA developed sophisticated methods of indexing human populations with the intention of control. This provided the underpinning logic which governed a counterinsurgency doctrine that came to rely increasingly on psywar, or psyops. The CIA provoked the assassination of Lumumba, and Kennedy would propose similar actions against Castro, Trujillo, Diem, and Duvalier. The heavy endorsement of these practices by the president and the American propaganda machine would serve to accelerate a form of counterinsurgency that had been incubating for some time.

Most significant to this period was the CIA weaponization of culture, the ensuing deployment of psychological warfare on a massive scale to control undesirable forms of human behaviour, and the use of militarized thought-police to regulate those who resisted accelerated pacification. Integral to the operation of the clandestine model was the example established in Laos and Thailand, where the illegal procedures of the counterinsurgent para-state structure were hidden by secret funding networks and alliances with drug-lords and the criminal underworld.

Under Kennedy, it is arguable that many aspects of counterinsurgency became further entrenched within a compartmentalized and technical government bureaucracy. As a bizarre and twisted rendition of Vollmer's cop-as-social worker, U.S.-trained police around the world performed a comparable function as social engineers. Their primary duty to capital, property, and those who owned it would inevitably direct the police of various nations to build up intelligence networks, catalogue civilians, and root out those who threatened the imperial status quo of "open shop" economies and American domination. Counterinsurgency doctrine under Kennedy took on

a distinct character that focused on sowing division amongst cultures being colonized, and, relatedly, psywar aimed at stoking internal conflict as a premise to purge targeted subversives.

Because the main target in this war was civilian and not military, militarized political police were promoted as the most effective tool used to implement counterinsurgency policy “on the ground.” For these police, countering subversives devolved into extensive and habitual reliance upon kidnappings, incarceration, torture, and assassination. Operation Phoenix and Operation Condor were the natural extensions of these policies.

The seeds of counterinsurgency were planted firmly within U.S. government, intelligence agencies, military and academic institutions, the police, and through Kennedy’s preeminent focus, even into human cultures worldwide. The new American counterinsurgency doctrine, propelled by the intense interest and devotion of Camelot-era modernists, would have widespread and long-term ramifications for years and decades following the somewhat ironic assassination of JFK.

However, American counterinsurgency was not the sole creation or result of the personal interests of President Kennedy. As we have seen, counterinsurgency had been ingrained into the fabric of American military and police operations long before the Cold War, Kennedy, Castro, or the war in Vietnam. Counterinsurgency was used for centuries against the Indigenous population of America, it was also commonly used to control African slaves and European indentured servants, and eventually, all those perceived to be amongst what Frank Donner called the “dangerous classes.” As continental westward expansion terminated at the Pacific coast, counterinsurgency was focused on the growing power of the working class at home, and additionally, the working masses living in countries that would become part of the American colonial system. Arguably, the most pronounced period in the expansion of United States

counterinsurgency doctrine occurred at the turn of the 20th century, as tactics developed during war with the Indigenous tribes of North America were exported for other intrigues. At the same time as police forces and national guardsmen violently crushed strikes at home, their Marine counterparts used terror and violence to control colonial populations in Latin America and Asia.

Expanding the dialogue and narrative surrounding America's use of counterinsurgency is important to our current understanding of U.S. Empire. When counterinsurgency is classified as something unique to the Kennedy-era, and by judging JFK's counterinsurgency as a policy of failure, there is a collapse in logic which casts an obstructionist shadow over the nature and intent of American imperialism. Kennedy was carrying on a tradition passed to him by Jackson, Sherman, McKinley, Roosevelt and Wilson. The implementation of JFK's counterinsurgency doctrine, while highly experimental, conformed to past policy, and led to a greater expansion and refinement of American counterinsurgency capabilities. This culminated in the CIA's Operation Condor, which was constructed intentionally by Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon as a counterinsurgency operation which obscured U.S. involvement or culpability in the rise of the fascist dictatorships of the Southern Cone. These clandestine tactics were carried forward to the illegal wars in Central America during the Reagan-era. The invasions of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria in the 21st century resulted in a popular revival of these ancient techniques, one which has not abated up until the present time.

Certainly, a more honest and rational examination of these practices will be necessary if we wish for a future with less, and not more, counterinsurgency warfare, and the immeasurable civilian suffering which is the intended and desired outcome of these operations. As complex issues related to environmental changes, ecological collapse, and overpopulation face the coming generation, it is well past the time to consider dismantling this antiquated apparatus.

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