The Hup Tac plan was produced by MACV, and given lip service by the GVN. But even this feeble effort collapsed in 1965 under increasing VC pressure, abetted by lack of GVN support and poor U.S. planning. Meanwhile both the U.S. and GVN, frustrated over their seemingly insoluble problem in South Vietnam, began looking at ways to relieve it by carrying the war to the North. Growing VC strength and the first signs of NVA infiltration helped reinforce this rationale. In effect, just as Washington was finally facing up to the needs of a C-I strategy, the deterioration of the situation led instead to growing emphasis on relieving the pressure on the GVN through direct U.S. military involvement.

PACIFICATION TAKES A BACK SEAT -- 1965 TO 1966

Counterinsurgency programs again took a back seat until well into 1967. When the U.S. launched its "reprisal" policy of air strikes against the North, McGeorge Bundy at least clung to the hope that if this brought a respite for the GVN "the most urgent order of business will then be the improvement and broadening of the pacification program, especially in its non-military elements..." The object of the new policy was "to effect a visible upward turn in pacification, in governmental effectiveness, in operations against the Viet Cong, and in the whole U.S./GVN relationship." This was duly enshrined in the formal Presidential decisions of February 13, 1965, the first of which was that "We will intensify by all available means the program of pacification within SVN." The Pentagon Papers note that "This stress on action in the South reflected a serious concern at high levels in the White House and the State Department... that a growing preoccupation with action against the North would be likely to cause the U.S. Mission and the GVN leadership to neglect the all-important struggle within the borders of South Vietnam." They were right, though it is not clear what else the GVN could realistically have done in its state of disarray.

At any rate, from this point forward there is hardly any stress on pacification in the policy documents relating to the growing U.S. military intervention in Vietnam. True, "even during the dark days of
1964-1965, most Americans paid lip service, particularly in official, on the record statements, to the ultimate importance of pacification. But their public affirmation of the clichés about 'winning the hearts and minds of the people' were not related to any programs or priorities then in existence in Vietnam, and they can mislead the casual observer."

Instead the debate over ground strategy in 1965 revolved around the level and mission of U.S. forces. As described in the Pentagon Papers, three identifiable schools emerged: (1) base security -- simply protecting the U.S. bases involved in the bombing of the North; (2) Ambassador Taylor's favored "enclave strategy," aimed at denying the enemy certain key coastal areas while releasing ARVN to fight the war inland; and (3) a search-and-destroy strategy to seize the initiative, as pressed by Westmoreland and the JCS. The base security strategy adopted initially was soon effectively superseded by NSAM 328 (April 6, 1966), which first allowed Westmoreland to use U.S. forces more offensively, as he desired. In turn the enclave strategy had its brief day, but by June Westmoreland had full authority to employ his growing U.S. ground forces as he saw fit.

The difference between Westmoreland and Taylor was the former's insistence on using U.S. and 3rd Country forces to take the war to the enemy. Taylor was quite content to let RVNAF do that with the occasional assist from the Allied forces if they got into difficulty. Westmoreland did not think they could do it, and he was convinced that no kind of victory could be had unless some pressure were put on the VC/DRV forces in South Vietnam.

RENEWED DEBATE OVER STRATEGY -- 1966 TO 1967

In 1966, after U.S. military intervention had averted GVN collapse, issues again arose over how to conduct the war. They arose in part from Washington's growing frustration over the demands of the U.S. military for escalation of the U.S. effort, from failure of the bombing campaign against North Vietnam to force Hanoi to desist, and from the dawning realization that continuing to grind up the enemy main forces did not by itself offer a way to achieve our aims so long as Hanoi could keep replacing its losses by infiltration and VC recruiting in the South.
By this time, however, pacification was no longer seen as a preferred alternative strategy but merely as an indispensable corollary to the big-unit war against the growing VC/NVA main forces.

Other contributory factors were the August 1965 return to Saigon of Ambassador Lodge -- a convinced advocate of a pacification-oriented strategy, and President Johnson's emphasis on the need to stress the "other war." While this emphasis may have stemmed from his perception of U.S. domestic political needs as well as from strategic considerations, at the February 1966 Honolulu Conference he pressed hard on reemphasizing pacification-oriented programs. This time, however, something new was added. The first steps were taken to create special U.S. machinery in both Washington and Saigon to give specific high-level focus to this effort (see Chapters VI and VII). Thus for the first time pacification began to have high-level vested interests speaking for it. In their new roles Porter in Saigon and the author in Washington began pushing practical measures, backed by the President, McNamara, and Lodge in particular.

By 1966 small-scale C-I efforts began growing again -- this time as a modest complement to the escalating main-force war. CIA and AID stepped up their attempts to generate rural paramilitary and developmental programs under the new rubric of Revolutionary Development (RD). But the whole effort still added up to only a tiny fraction of the men and resources being invested in the main-force war. Since the U.S./GVN military still regarded such programs as essentially civilian business, they gave only modest support. The GVN's many promises at Honolulu remained just that for the most part.

In March 1966 a detailed blueprint for a primarily pacification-oriented U.S. strategy came from an unusual source, a study group set up by the Army Chief of Staff. Done mostly by young field officers who had served as advisers in Vietnam, the PROVN Report proposed that the main weight of the GVN/U.S. effort be focused on territorial security, economic and political reform, and nation-building rather than anti-main-force operations, and be carried out on the U.S. side by a unified single manager system extending from Washington down to district level in Vietnam. While PROVN had considerable educational value, especially
to the post-1966 pacification effort, its far-reaching proposals were initially rejected both in Washington and in the field.\(^{47}\)

Having greater impact than PROVN was a prescient "Roles and Missions" study done by a talented study group under Porter in summer 1966. Agreeing with PROVN that RD (pacification) was the key to a successful strategy, it dwelt on practical steps by which both the GVN and U.S. should go about this task. For example, it focused more than any previous U.S. study on the critical need to get at the directing apparatus of the insurgency at all levels, noting that no task was given so much lip service yet was so totally neglected in fact. It further urged greater use of U.S. leverage to force GVN reforms, and even called for analyzing whether the lavish use of air and artillery in populated areas was having counterproductive impact on village attitudes. While the "Roles and Missions" proposals foreshadowed many of CORDS' later emphases, they were not accepted as policy at the time by either Lodge or MACV.\(^{48}\) So the already mountainous stack of reports and recommendations continued to mount, but their impact remained minimal.

However, an unforeseen new element in the evolving situation was about to give a powerful fillip to pacification. Since U.S. forces were increasingly taking over anti-main-force offensive operations, what role should RVNAF play? RD Minister Thang, Porter, and Komer, arguing that sustained clear-and-hold operations were essential to successful pacification, proposed in June 1966 that a strengthened RF/PF be assigned this mission and be placed under the RD Ministry. This was turned down by Ky, perhaps under pressure from the ARVN generals. The "Roles and Missions" study proposed instead that a radically reformed RVNAF, including most ARVN infantry battalions, be assigned this primary role.\(^{49}\) MACV and the JCS came to a similar conclusion, leading Lodge to conclude prematurely that the Americans had finally achieved "giving pacification the highest priority which it has ever had -- making it, in effect, the main purpose of all our activities."\(^{50}\) The wish was father to the thought in this case. Nonetheless, the GVN did pledge at the October 1966 Manila Conference that over half of ARVN maneuver battalions would be assigned to RD support.
A perceptive analysis prepared in the office of the Under Secretary of State in December 1966 forecast how weak a reed the ARVN was likely to be and how little a pacification-oriented strategy was actually being pursued. Basic counterinsurgency precepts "have survived in principle but have been little applied in practice." ARVN "has never escaped from its conventional warfare mold." Most GVN and ARVN leaders neither understand nor press a sensible pacification approach. Despite the claims of top U.S. and GVN generals "the waging of a conventional war has overriding priority, perhaps as much as 9 to 1." Hence ARVN's basic weaknesses would probably undermine its effectiveness in pacification -- just as in conventional warfare.51

Frustrated over continuing military demands for more troops and bombing despite inability to relate these to a convincing strategy, and newly concerned over the inflationary burden being placed on the South Vietnamese economy, McNamara also focused heavily again on the pacification option. In a pessimistic report to the President following his October 1966 visit to Vietnam, McNamara concluded that neither a further major U.S. troop buildup nor bombing of the North would achieve our aims, and argued for settling down to a long-haul "military posture that we credibly could maintain indefinitely" via stabilizing at 470,000 the U.S. force level, installing a barrier system along the DMZ, stabilizing the bombing campaign against the North, pressing for negotiations, and pursuing "a vigorous pacification program."52 Calling pacification to date "a bad disappointment" (in fact it still hardly existed), McNamara granted that of all his recommendations

... the one most difficult to implement is perhaps the most important one -- enlivening the pacification program. The odds are less than even for this task, if only because we have failed consistently since 1961 to make a dent in the problem. But, because the 1967 trend of pacification will, I believe, be the main talisman of ultimate U.S. success or failure in Vietnam, extraordinary imagination and effort should go into changing the stripes of that problem.53

Commenting on this shift in McNamara's thinking, the Pentagon Papers note that "the increased emphasis on the pacification effort is apparently a result of the feeling that, since it represented the heart
of the problem in Vietnam, and the main force war was only contributory to it, perhaps all that was needed in the main force war was to keep the enemy off the back of the pacification effort in a strategic defensive, rather than to destroy the enemy in a strategic offensive.\textsuperscript{54} McNamara further developed this alternative to an attrition strategy in his Draft Presidential Memorandum (DPM) of November 17, 1966. He argued that "the data suggest that we have no prospects of attriting the enemy force at a rate equal to or greater than his capability to infiltrate and recruit, and this will be true at either the 470,000 U.S. personnel level or 570,000."\textsuperscript{55}

The new MACV/JCS Combined Campaign Plan for 1967 (AB 142), completed in November 1966, further "committed RVNAF to support pacification with the majority of its forces."\textsuperscript{56} For the first time it gave pacification considerable prominence, reflecting input from the Porter and Komer staffs and from General Thang. But again the primary focus was on the main-force threat. In fact too little effective military support to permit steady pacification expansion was given in 1967. Many ARVN battalions performed poorly in the RD support role and were constantly being diverted to other missions. Hence the pacifiers began looking more toward expansion and improvement of the RF/PF for this purpose.

The growing debate over how to fight the war became still more sharply focused in 1967. Again it was concern over new military proposals for more troops, more bombing of the North, and the like which drove the belated search for strategic alternatives. It was precipitated by General Westmoreland's March 18 request for around 200,000 more U.S. troops.\textsuperscript{57} Several civilian critiques disputed the need for more troops and suggested various alternatives, including greater efforts to jack up the Vietnamese contribution.\textsuperscript{58} OSD/SA directly attacked the feasibility of a "war of attrition," pointing out that the enemy's capability to control his losses meant that more U.S. troops could not destroy his force. The DOD civilian leadership came down in favor of stabilizing the U.S. effort rather than escalating. The civilians won, and the President approved only a modest force increase to 525,000.
Again, the civilian arguments against troop increases and bombing were far more cogently spelled out than the strategic alternatives they advanced. While a U.S. force stabilized at roughly existing levels was to provide the shield while the GVN pacified, DOD views on how the latter was to be accomplished were only vaguely spelled out; they added up only to getting the GVN to pull more weight and to get pacification moving. Since DOD at the same time kept stressing how the GVN was not doing its job and how poorly pacification was going, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that DOD civilian officials were more skilled at shooting down MACV, CINCPAC, and JCS than at developing a viable alternative. Those who in 1966-1967 opposed the military view in the growing strategy debate were much more clear on why they didn’t like the old strategy than on how to devise a new one. The crucial determinant was more the politically sensitive level at which U.S. reserves would have to be called up than strategic considerations in Vietnam.59

THE POST-TET REASSESSMENT

The Tet shock of February 1968, reinforced by MACV's controversial "request" for another 200,000-odd U.S. troops, was the final proof in Washington civilian eyes that the attrition strategy would not work.60 To the new Secretary of Defense, charged with recommending the Washington response, the real question was: "Could [our present course in Vietnam] ever prove successful even if vastly more than 200,000 troops were sent?"61 Whatever the validity of this conclusion, the Pentagon Papers reveal that it was based on bleak, even panicky Washington assessments of the situation in Vietnam, which turn out in hindsight to have been largely wrong.62 For example, the gloomy Vietnam prognosis in the February 29 initial draft of an OSD memorandum to the President proved off-base in almost every important respect.63

In the search for strategic alternatives which preoccupied Washington during February-March 1968, no pacification-oriented option was even seriously considered, since both the civilians and the JCS prematurely wrote off the new program as in a "shambles."64 Among the plethora of strategic option papers prepared by various agencies
apparently only one -- an OSD/SA paper -- even raised the pacification variant, only to reject it because "the enemy's current offensive appears to have killed the program once and for all (sic)."65

The civilian position which evolved, and was sent to the President, was that even with 200,000 more troops the existing strategy could not succeed. As the Pentagon Papers remark, these civilian officials

finally came to the realization that no military strategy could be successful unless a South Vietnamese political and military entity was capable of winning the support of its people. Thus, for the first time, U.S. efforts were to be made contingent upon specific reform measures undertaken by the GVN, and U.S. leverage was to be used to elicit these reforms. South Vietnam was to be put on notice that the limit of U.S. patience and commitment had been approached.66

But all that the civilians recommended as an alternative was shifting to a defensive strategy of securing the populated areas and denying the enemy victory, while pressing the GVN and RVNAF to assume more of the burden. In the event no new strategic guidance was issued to the field. The JCS vigorously opposed a change, and even questioned the propriety of sending such guidance to the field commander.67

Nonetheless, the Tet shock did prove a turning point in a way which no-one foresaw. President Johnson's decisions to restrict the troop ceiling to a modestly increased 549,500 and partially (later fully) to suspend bombing of the North marked the peak of the U.S. commitment and the beginning of U.S. disengagement. And this shock, coming on top of the Tet Offensive itself, did force the GVN and ARVN at long last to take such measures as manpower mobilization and some purging of poor commanders and officials. After Tet 1968, GVN performance improved significantly. And for once attrition worked, though only because the enemy was consistently attacking us rather than our attacking him. The enemy's cumulative losses during the Tet and follow-on offensives of 1968 were a major factor in his being forced to revert to a protracted war strategy in 1969-1971. Another contributory factor was that the pacification program proved far less severely hurt than Washington had prematurely concluded, and entered a period of rapid
expansion in late 1968 which continued for the next two years. As a result, the GVN position four years later, in early 1972, was far stronger than at Tet 1968, despite U.S. withdrawal of almost 500,000 U.S. troops and a substantial cutback in the air war.

WHY WAS THE PACIFICATION ALTERNATIVE NEGLECTED FOR SO LONG?

This brief review shows how from 1955 on counterinsurgency or pacification was a major if not dominant element in high policy thinking, both in Washington and Saigon. But it also shows an immense gap between the policy prominence it was given and what actually happened in the field. To see the full dimensions of this discontinuity between policy and performance we must look beyond GVN/U.S. declaratory policy at resource allocation in Vietnam. Even a cursory review of the bidding demonstrates that the GVN and U.S. actually devoted very little effort and resources to pacification programs, at least up to 1967. Throughout the 1955-1965 period these remained instead a very small tail to the large conventional military dog. Despite the recurrent policy emphasis on pacification-cum-counterinsurgency, and many abortive experiments, such programs never really amounted to much until quite late in the day.

The proof of the pudding lies in the feeble resources and manpower devoted to them, compared to the massive resources devoted to the conventional military effort (and the budget support and anti-inflation inputs which they required). We have seen (Chapter IV) how little U.S. military aid was allocated to the paramilitary CG/SDC (later RF/PF). U.S. civilian aid inputs were of course far more modest than military aid. But even AID, for example, devoted far fewer resources to police and rural programs than to the economic stabilization effort required largely by the militarization of the war. Even in 1966, the year of so-called "re-emphasis on pacification," estimated GVN/U.S. pacification outlays amounted to less than $600 million (in dollars and piasters) out of a total $21 billion in estimated GVN/U.S. war costs. And since pacification utilized almost wholly Vietnamese personnel and largely local resources, it absorbed in 1966 little over 1 percent of what the U.S. itself was spending on the war.
So, whether or not a primarily counterinsurgency-oriented strategy was sound, the fact is that it was never given a full-scale try. Instead, it was swamped almost from the outset by more conventional approaches to the highly unconventional situation confronted in Vietnam. In this sense, it is hard to fault Hilsman's conclusion as of 1966 that "If Vietnam does represent a failure in the Kennedy administration, it was a failure in implementation." 69

If so many were advocating a multifaceted politico-military counterinsurgency strategy, why did it fail for so long to get off the ground? The reasons are many and complex. Most of them have already been alluded to in this study. Schlesinger, Hoopes, and Hilsman all attribute the failure to the reluctance of the military hierarchy to change. Hoopes claims, for example, that "predictably" the new concept of counterinsurgency developed in the early Kennedy years "met with determined resistance from the upper echelons of the U.S. military hierarchy -- particularly in the Army -- and was ironically and most unfortunately never applied in Vietnam." 70 Hilsman finds that although many people in the Pentagon, in the Special Forces, and elsewhere in the armed services -- especially among company and field-grade officers -- became enthusiastic believers in the concept as a result of their personal experiences in the field, Secretary McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and many general officers were never more than lukewarm. General Harkins, for example, the commander in Vietnam, always acknowledged the importance of winning the allegiance of the people. But he never saw that the central principle of the concept was the need to subordinate military measures to a political and social program. What he apparently believed was not only that a regular war should be fought in Vietnam, but that it could be fought parallel to the necessary political and social program without destroying that program -- which was probably a mistake. In any case, General Harkins was content to leave to someone else both the problem of pursuing the political and social struggle and the problem of seeing that military measures did not destroy it. As a result, the strategic concept was never fully implemented and military factors were emphasized over political. 71

But it was more than the slowness of key officials like Harkins to comprehend. Most U.S. and Vietnamese generals felt as he did, and
still do to this day. The same holds true of many key civilians. And even though the civilians who favored a more counterinsurgency-oriented strategy could affect policy, they had far less of a handle on performance in either the U.S. or the Vietnamese government.

Thus we come back to institutional explanations. Counterinsurgency was never tried on a sufficient scale largely because it was not part of the institutional repertoire of most major GVN and U.S. agencies involved. Until 1966-1967 it had plenty of supporters but no major organizational entity speaking for it. It fell between stools, and so was overshadowed from the outset by the more conventional approaches of the major GVN and U.S. institutions which were playing out their own institutional repertoires. The military establishments in particular knew how to mobilize resources, provide logistic support, deploy assets, manage large efforts. So they employed all these skills to develop irresistible momentum toward fighting their kind of war, while the C-I advocates had a hard time even getting anything started. This changed only in 1967, when the military themselves were saddled with responsibility for pacification.

Moreover, whatever the merits of a C-I strategy, it was futile to stress such an alternative without developing a capability for carrying it out. Though many were advocating a more sophisticated counterguerrilla strategy, neither the U.S. nor the South Vietnamese developed tailored counterinsurgency capabilities on any major scale. Despite all the brave talk in the early Sixties (spurred by President Kennedy's genuine interest), the U.S. military services never made much of a real investment in them. The Army's Green Berets, the USAF "Air Commandos," the Navy's "Seals" were all small-scale efforts, never funded as their advocates desired. Service in them was rarely regarded as a desirable career pattern among professionals, which illustrates another form of bureaucratic constraint. There was relatively little R&D effort before 1965, except for ARPA's. Civilian agency counterinsurgency programs were even smaller. Police support programs were tiny and conventionally oriented. Though AID and CIA improvised several promising rural experiments, they had little existing capability for supporting major rural programs with paramilitary features in a chaotic wartime environment.
Another institutional constraint on any effective pacification effort was the lack for too long of any GVN or U.S. management structure able to give it proper stress. As we have seen (Chapter VI), both the U.S. and the GVN attempted to manage a multifaceted conflict through essentially conventional government machinery. Indeed, if pacification is correctly regarded as necessarily Vietnamese business, the GVN of Diệm and his early successors clearly proved incapable of administering much of a program, even with U.S. support. Not until 1966-1968 were steps taken to create special management structures to bring together pacification-related programs and to give them high-level focus. Nor was any consistent effort made at any point to unify interallied conflict management.

Finally, it is clear that the escalating quasiconventional military conflict during 1963-1965 in itself acted as a magnet which drew U.S. and GVN attention alike toward conventional military responses. It led us to focus even more on the main-force war and Hanoi's support of it, to the neglect of the insurgency aspect. The beginning of NVA infiltration, and Hanoi's ability to match our escalation, helped keep our eyes firmly fixed on the big-unit war. Paradoxically, the U.S. only returned to pacification, and started backing and organizing it seriously, when the costs of the war had risen to the point where the civilian leadership in Washington began to find them unbearable. By that time, pacification could no longer be the dominant strategic thrust, but was merely a vital corollary to what had become a stalemated quasiconventional war.

**WOULD A PACIFICATION ALTERNATIVE HAVE WORKED?**

It is easy to conclude that for all these reasons the gap between policy and performance was inevitable -- that whatever the policy intent, there was no hope of carrying it out more effectively. Any other conclusion would be at best an historical "if." Yet there is considerable evidence that the U.S. and GVN could probably have performed more effectively -- if only because in many respects they finally did. However spotty in many respects GVN and RVNAF performance has been, there is no question that on balance they have performed much better since.
Tet 1968 than in the period before. How else explain the improvement in the situation despite the progressive withdrawal of almost 500,000 U.S. troops and the sharp reduction in U.S. air support? Of course, many factors contributed to this improvement, not least among them the heavy VC/NVA losses in their 1968 offensives which helped force Hanoi to revert in 1969-1971 to a strategy of protracted war. Another important factor was the Cambodian coup of early 1970, which prompted a major diversion of North Vietnamese resources in 1970-1971.

But South Vietnamese performance during 1968-1971 was also in sharp contrast to what it had been before Tet 1968 (see Chapter III). A larger, stronger, and better-equipped RVNAF managed to take over almost the entire ground combat role from the departing U.S. forces. Overall GVN administrative performance also improved significantly. But in no important field did GVN performance improve so much as in pacification, a program which remained almost wholly "Vietnamized" even though extensively subsidized and advised by the United States.

Indeed, it is on the role which the 1968-1971 pacification program played in the turnaround of the war during 1968-1971 that the case for a counterinsurgency-oriented strategy must chiefly rest. This is because the only large-scale and sustained test of what counterinsurgency-oriented programs could accomplish came with this program, which began belatedly in 1967 and has continued along essentially the same lines since (see Chapter VII). It represents the first time that the GVN and U.S. allotted sufficient manpower and resources on a continuing basis to competing effectively with the VC in the countryside. For example, GVN/U.S. resources devoted to pacification rose from under $600 million in CY 1966 to around $1.5 billion at the CY 1970 peak. The cumulative impact achieved during 1968-1971 is at least suggestive of what might have been accomplished earlier if comparable backing had been received. Despite the many weaknesses of the Hamlet Evaluation System, it gives a reasonable picture of the trend; at the post-Tet low point, in March 1968, only 59 percent of the population (and this mostly urban) was regarded as even "relatively secure." By end-1971 this had risen to over 96 percent, and the gains were mostly rural.
Aside from its larger scale and sustained nature, pacification 1967-1971 was different in several other important respects. It represented the first time that either the GVN or the U.S. had developed a unified management structure for this program (see Chapter VI), and almost the first time since the Strategic Hamlet Program that it received sustained high-level GVN and U.S. support. President Thieu, who took office in late 1967, was the first top GVN leader who was thoroughly pacification-oriented and played a major continuing role in its implementation. In sum, many of the basic flaws which made pacification a shadow program in 1954-1966 were at least partly remedied in the subsequent period, with visible results.

On the other hand, pacification 1967-1971 was hardly a pure test of a counterinsurgency-oriented strategy as a preferred alternative. Since it did not achieve momentum until after the "big-unit" war had escalated, its impact is hard to sort out from that of the big-unit war. To what extent can the observed changes in the countryside during 1968-1971 be attributed to pacification, as opposed to (a) the "shield" provided by the allied anti-main-force effort, which largely drove the VC/NVA from most populated areas; (b) the Cambodian diversion; or (c) the heavy VC/NVA losses in their 1968 offensives? Even the large-scale pacification effort generated since 1966 has been at most only a modest complement to what had already escalated into a quasicontventional war. The disparity between resources devoted to pacification and those allocated to the big-unit war remains enormous even today. And it was the fortuitous circumstance that the U.S. took over most of the big-unit war and shouldered RVNAF to one side which led to a search for a new role for RVNAF. This more than anything else facilitated RVNAF's diversion to local security tasks and helped put pacification on the map.

Thus it seems clear that a predominantly counterinsurgency-oriented strategy would have had its best chance for success prior to 1964-1965, before insurgency escalated into a quasicontventional war. If the GVN and U.S. had pressed this approach on a suitable scale in 1955-1964, instead of putting their chief emphasis on conventional military responses, the Viet Cong might never have achieved the momentum that they did. This is certainly the lesson from the successful British C-I
response in Malaya, though it is admittedly difficult to analogize from the 1948-1960 Malayan case to Vietnam. Moreover, it was the failure to develop a C-I program worthy of the name which helped lead the U.S. irrevocably to the conclusion that the conflict could not be won in the South without pressure on North Vietnam as well.

But could the GVN, with U.S. backing, have created an effective counterinsurgency capability at that earlier time? In the event they did not, for many reasons already discussed, including the incapacities of the Diem regime, the lack of any viable politico-administrative framework, and the inability of the U.S. to bring about the necessary changes. Yet it must also be acknowledged that the later Thieu regime did prove capable of carrying out a major pacification effort under even more adverse circumstances in the midst of an escalated war. It is at least conceivable that, if the U.S. had pressed the Diem regime far harder in 1955-1963, had allocated most of the aid it invested to counterinsurgency-type programs, had greatly strengthened U.S. management, and had insisted that the field conform to Washington policy, the insurgency might have been arrested.

By 1964-1965 pacification almost inevitably took a back seat to the growing "main force" war. From then on a substantial military "shield" for pacification efforts became indispensable. But, as we have seen, the GVN/U.S. conventional military effort tended to become an end in itself, to the comparative neglect of pacification. Even though the latter remained a matter of major policy intent, in fact it suffered a near-hiatus during 1964-1965. Though a growing pacification effort finally got under way in 1966-1967, it remains even today a modest complement to the conventional military effort -- not the dominant strategic thrust. While it must also be noted that pacification finally had its inning under primarily military auspices, we never struck an optimum balance between pacification and the big-unit war.

In the last analysis, whether a pacification-oriented strategy would have proved a viable response must remain an historical "if." Naturally, it looks much more desirable in retrospect than what we actually did instead. But its successful execution would probably have required far greater U.S. success in turning around the GVN than was ever
achieved (see Chapter III). This is why the "counterinsurgency school" were generally stronger advocates of administrative reorganization, a more vigorous advisory effort, and greater use of leverage than their more conventional-minded colleagues. Yet what was achieved belatedly (and perhaps temporarily) in 1967-1971 is also strongly suggestive of what could have been done. Even allowing for many other contributory factors, it suggests that vigorous emphasis on a pacification-oriented approach was feasible and might have led to a more satisfactory outcome—especially if applied much earlier. At the least, its even half-hearted execution would probably have resulted in less militarization and Americanization of the conflict, and in a greatly reduced toll in human life and resources as well as tragic side effects. And it is the very contrast between this enormous toll and the ambiguous results achieved that has fed U.S. disillusionment with the war. Hence the very way in which we have fought the Vietnam war may have been what has foreclosed the "long-haul, low-cost" pacification strategy which in hindsight offered perhaps the best hope of achieving U.S. aims.
IX. WHAT INSTITUTIONAL LESSONS CAN BE LEARNED?

The preceding analysis suggests that, whatever the wisdom of the various U.S. decisions to intervene in Vietnam, there is also much to be learned from the way we went about it. Though by no means the whole answer, the underlying conclusion which emerges from this study is the difficulty encountered by conventional government institutions -- in this case both U.S. and GVN -- in responding optimally to such atypical problems as they confronted in Vietnam. This does much to explain why there was such an immense disparity between the cumulatively massive effort mounted and the ambiguous results achieved. It also helps explain why such a gap emerged between policy and performance -- between the guidelines laid down by the policymakers and what was actually done in the field.

Among the many underlying reasons have been the unique and unfamiliar conflict environment of Vietnam, the atypical nature of the conflict in which we became enmeshed, and the sharp contrast between the enemy we faced and the regime we backed. As this study seeks to demonstrate, however, it was more than that. We perceived the difficulties we confronted better than our responses would suggest. But a series of constraints -- largely inherent in the behavior patterns of the GVN and U.S. institutions involved in the struggle -- made it difficult for them to gear their responses sufficiently well to those perceptions. Almost regardless of what policy called for, these institutions tended to play out their existing institutional repertoires, and to adapt themselves only slowly even to felt needs. And there was little top-level follow-through or adequate management machinery to force them into different patterns of response. Largely as a result, much of what we did turned out to be futile, wasted, and even irrelevant. Here is one key reason why, despite all the tragic human and material costs incurred, the U.S. and GVN have still not achieved a satisfactory outcome in Vietnam.
If this analysis is at least broadly valid, then many useful lessons flow logically from it. Insofar as they relate to the typical behavior of government institutions when confronting unfamiliar problems, these lessons of course have far wider application than to insurgency situations of the Vietnam type. But their applicability also would obviously vary with each future situation. In fact Vietnam itself teaches us the dangers implicit in taking a past experience as an explicit model for the future. As we learned from attempting to apply in Vietnam what we learned in the Korean War, such lessons may not be equally applicable in quite different situations. Since the unique features of Vietnam are highly unlikely to be duplicated, we must avoid analogies which could lead to gross misperceptions about how best to deal with quite different contingencies. The suggested lessons which follow are framed with this caveat in mind.

It is also tempting to suggest, as one key lesson of Vietnam, that "policy is easy to decide; execution is much more difficult." But this would be a grievous oversimplification. For sound policy formulation must take fully into account the capabilities of the institutions involved to execute it effectively. Where a high degree of institutional adaptation is required, our Vietnam experience amply illustrates the sheer enormity of the task of making much of a dent in the "system." It shows the difficulty of changing institutional behavior patterns, even in the light of frustrating experience. Yet large, hierarchically organized institutions seem to be a fixed feature of the contemporary scene, indispensable to meeting many complex needs of society. Since we can't do without them, we have to pay the price of accepting their built-in limitations to the extent that they cannot be altered. Thus, wise policy must take adequately into account the institutional realities that will largely shape its execution.

Indeed, reflecting on our Vietnam failures, Stanley Hoffmann asks: "Are bureaucratic problems ones about which we can do very much?" He fears that the government bureaucratic apparatus is "thoroughly unreformable." But this seems a harsh verdict, perhaps overinfluenced by our Vietnam experience. Vietnam was so atypical as to be a poor test...
case. And this study has shown that even in Vietnam some institutional adaptation emerged and much more was proposed. In fact, history is replete with examples of institutional adaptation over time. Also, some institutions seem to adapt better than others, perhaps private ones more rapidly than public under the competitive pressures of the marketplace. At any rate, the better we understand the nature of the problem and the impact of the constraints involved, the more likely we are to seek sensible remedies.

Moreover, it is almost axiomatic that institutional change tends to be forced in the wake of what is widely perceived as a catastrophe, when accepted patterns of behavior are severely challenged as having failed. Numerous examples from military history come readily to mind. Whether or not they regard Vietnam as a catastrophe, our military and foreign policy institutions are under heavy fire for their Vietnam performance. In this sense the climate for absorbing "lessons" from this costly experience may be more favorable then if the outcome had been less ambiguous.

Lastly, it is always difficult to frame such lessons in terms that are sufficiently generalized to be broadly applicable, yet specific enough to be operationally useful. What follows may not satisfactorily resolve this dilemma, nor does it pretend to exhaust the lessons of Vietnam. In keeping with the purpose of this study, it comprises three categories: (a) some general observations on the requisites for adaptive institutional responses; (b) more specific suggestions as to the various ways and means of generating such adaptation; and (c) similar suggestions as to how best to generate such adaptive responses in client regimes. All these are stated rather briefly and baldly, since they merely attempt to synthesize and summarize what has already been developed in the preceding chapters. Moreover, the author is painfully aware that in every case they are "easier said than done."

THE REQUISITES OF ADAPTIVE RESPONSE

1. Perhaps the key lesson to be learned from our Vietnam experience is that atypical problems demand specially tailored solutions. So
baldly stated this sounds almost banal. But as Vietnam shows, such solutions are all too difficult to achieve in practice. Neither the U.S. nor the GVN get very high marks on this score in the Vietnam case, in strong contrast to the British in Malaya, for example. Instead, our approach was distinguished by its sheer conventionality. The reasons for this, as discussed in this study, suggest several further lessons.

2. Above all the policymaker must take fully into account the ability of the institutions carrying out the policy to execute it as intended. For, whatever the nature of the problem and the policy adopted, the institutions tasked to execute it will tend to contort this policy in practice to doing what they are used to doing -- playing out their institutional repertoires. Vietnam provides overwhelming evidence that existing U.S. and GVN agencies -- including their field echelons -- were for the most part unable to perform effectively missions that were very different from those they were used to performing. And their reluctance to adapt persisted, for largely institutional reasons, long after it was patently clear that the missions were not being carried out effectively.

3. Adaptive response requires much more than well-conceived policy; it requires adequate machinery at all levels for effective follow-through to see that the policy is effectively carried out, and to force adaptation where essential. Such machinery was sadly lacking in most cases in Vietnam, and its absence contributed greatly to the gap between policy and performance. For what Vietnam suggests as to remedial measures see the next section below.

4. Where the U.S. -- as in Vietnam -- is largely fighting a war by proxy, effective means of stimulating optimum indigenous performance are essential. As this study suggests, the U.S. did not get comparable value for its massive aid to the GVN. Means of narrowing this gap are also discussed below.

WAYS OF FORCING ADAPTATION

As already suggested, it is much easier to draw such generalized, and in hindsight obvious, lessons than to learn from our Vietnam
experience how to apply them in practice. Indeed, this experience sug­
gests instead the enormous obstacles involved. Institutionalizing flexi­
bility and adaptiveness is no easy matter; it goes against the bureau­
cratic grain. Moreover, changing institutional repertoires entails far
more than a realistic appreciation of the nature of the problem and
clear policy guidance to cope with it -- guidance adapted flexibly to
changing circumstances. It also involves balanced programs vigorously
and flexibly carried out with a realistic sense of priorities, plus the
management machinery to pull these programs together and make sure they
are effectively carried out.

It is also more than just a matter of providing the right leader­
ship, important as this is. Vietnam shows how even highly qualified
and experienced leaders, many of whom saw clearly the need for adaptive
change, were often frustrated in their attempts to get it. All the other
factors which influence how an institution will perform its mission need
to be modified as well. Doctrine, training, performance standards, in­
ternal goals and incentive systems, and self-analysis capabilities must
all be made congruent with the mission to be performed. Fortunately,
some aspects of our Vietnam experience suggest at least partial ways
around these institutional roadblocks. What they add up to is the need
for a deliberate effort to offset the inevitable bureaucratic tendency
to keep doing the familiar and to adapt only slowly and incrementally,
no matter how clear the need for change.

1. First, and most obvious, we must select flexible and imagina­
tive conflict managers at all levels. It is depressing how so many of
our senior officers and officials in Vietnam, especially at the middle
levels, were picked on the basis of normal institutional criteria or
even the convenience of the institution rather than because they were
regarded as particularly qualified for the job. Vietnam shows how many
such qualified people are available but how poorly suited U.S. and GVN
personnel and incentive systems -- military and civilians -- are to bring­
ing them to the fore. There was no more painful example of the inade­
quacy of conventional personnel and selection systems for coping with
atypical needs. On this score, the military must learn that the best
commanders may not be the most flexible and adaptive program managers, nor the best advisers to local governments or forces. Civilian agencies must learn that executives to run large programs, especially in wartime, may be quite different animals from those who normally rise through regular promotion systems which value quite different talents.

2. Training and incentive systems need to be revised to place a higher premium on flexibility and adaptiveness instead of applying the "school solution," and on innovation and experiment rather than conformity. Vietnam all too often showed the inadequacy of "doing it by the book" — a book which wasn't really very relevant. Again this is admittedly easier said than done, but Vietnam also shows how high a price we paid for not trying harder to do so.

3. Where specially tailored programs which are not in conventional organizational repertoires or which cut across conventional agency lines are required, it may be best to set up autonomous ad hoc organizations to run them — with the requisite funding, resources, people, and other backing to do the job. If the institutional constraints described in this study are such an impediment to adaptive response, then it would seem better to adapt the organizational structure to the need — in other words, deliberately break the bureaucratic mold — than, as so often in Vietnam, to attempt to meet the need through the existing organizational structure. In general, such ad hoc expedients proved successful in Vietnam (e.g., the Marine CAPs, the CIDG program, the RD Ministry, or CORDS under MACV) when given adequate support.

4. Multidimensional conflict situations requiring integrated politico-economic as well as military responses can best be dealt with by unified management at all levels. Vietnam suggests that in such a conflict we cannot afford to separate out its many aspects and attempt to cope with them in separate bureaucratic compartments only loosely coordinated in the normal peacetime fashion in Washington or in the field. Such normal peacetime machinery of government did not suffice in either Washington or Saigon. Diffusion of responsibility proved the enemy of adaptive response. Interagency coordination and pulling all
strands together only at the White House level may suffice for policy formulation. But in the Vietnam case it proved wholly inadequate to compel an integrated effort, responsiveness to priorities, and adequate follow-through to prevent the individual agencies involved from marching to their own bureaucratic tunes. Based on his Vietnam experience, Barry Zorthian sees integrated policy direction and program management as the first "bedrock requirement" for successful U.S. assistance to a local counterinsurgency effort. He defines it as "recognition by the U.S. that a successful effort depends on an integrated and responsive political/military program; and organization of our own considerable resources in accordance with this principle as a means of maximum effectiveness."4

a. If and when an exceptional U.S. supporting effort which cuts sharply across normal agency responsibilities is decided upon, it seems advisable to set up special ad hoc machinery at the Washington level to manage it. Several options are available, ranging from making a single agency the executive agent through ad hoc task forces to special machinery in the White House itself. Whichever is decided upon, it will need a clear grant of Presidential authority and solid Presidential backing to overcome the natural bureaucratic infighting which it will almost inevitably generate.

b. Unified management of the U.S. effort in the field is similarly essential to optimum response. The loose "country team" approach was a failure in Vietnam. The author would tend in most cases to share the view of Sir Robert Thompson that "to ensure a united effort, the ambassador must be a proconsul with absolute authority locally over all policy and agencies."5

c. This raises a fundamental question as to whether the traditional U.S. separation between military and civilian responsibilities is optimum in multidimensional conflict situations such as Vietnam. Thompson regards civilian control as "imperative, though this does not mean that it cannot be exercised by a general in a civilian post."6 In the author's view, the top field post could be civilian or military, depending on the situation and on the caliber of leadership available. Few U.S. ambassadors have had much experience in managing large enterprises;
moreover, much would depend on whether U.S. support were to be predominantly military.

5. *Effective unified management takes more than just a "single manager"; he must also have his own staff.* As Vietnam experience demonstrates, the top manager cannot properly carry out his mandate without some kind of unified civil-military planning, operations, and evaluation staff responsible directly to him. He must have his own eyes and ears, and means of ensuring adequate follow-through. It need not be large, however; here is an instance when quality is far more important than quantity.

6. *A corollary lesson is the need to place a higher premium on thorough evaluation and analysis of performance,* since even the best managers need analytical tools to design optimum responses and facilitate learning. The relative lack of such analysis was a critical flaw in Vietnam. By its very nature, this uniquely fragmented politico-insurgency conflict made quantitative as well as qualitative analysis indispensable to understanding. Yet Enthoven and Smith underline that "there was no organized critical analysis of the strategy and operations of the Vietnam war -- cost effectiveness or otherwise." They conclude:

One of the main lessons for government organization that should be drawn from U.S. involvement in Vietnam is that the President and the Secretary of Defense must have, but today lack, a reliable source of information and analysis of overseas operations that is independent of the military chain of command and Service interests, can get at the basic facts, is capable of self-criticism, and can give searching consideration to genuine alternatives without prior commitment to existing policies. . . .

Another lesson of almost equal importance is that U.S. military commanders need, but for the most part either do not have or have and do not use, operations analysis organizations that provide them with a systematic method of learning by experience.

achieving adequate performance from allies

All the preceding lessons are, of course, as applicable to client states as they are to the United States itself. In the case of Vietnam,
the GVN's response to the threat it confronted was even more constrained than that of the U.S. And, surprisingly, most of the useful examples of adaptive response were U.S., rather than GVN-inspired. But Vietnam also suggests a series of ways in which the U.S. should act to secure optimum performance from the clients it is supporting.

1. U.S. aid inputs, however massive, cannot be effectively utilized without viable indigenous institutions to carry out the programs the U.S. is supporting. Lack of an effectively functioning GVN and RVNAF administrative structure to utilize it was one major reason why massive U.S. aid inputs to the GVN and RVNAF ended up largely wasted.

2. Avoid mirror-imaging as a routine response. When U.S. agencies are charged with helping shape and support local institutions, they almost invariably seek to shape these institutions along familiar U.S. lines, whether or not this is optimal (often this last question is not even addressed). In hindsight, we went much further in attempting to shape the GVN and RVNAF in our image than the situation called for. Thus much of our massive aid was misdirected, and too little aid flowed to programs which needed it most.

3. When the U.S. is supporting local programs, it should not hesitate where necessary to use the leverage provided by this support to ensure that it is optimally utilized. Despite the many obstacles involved, it is clear in retrospect that the U.S. failed to use sufficiently the enormous leverage its aid conferred on it to compel better GVN and RVNAF performance.

4. Any U.S. advisory effort should be specially tailored to the needs of each situation. Clearly, the U.S. advisory effort in Vietnam was too slowly expanded in scope and depth for optimum impact, not enough attention was paid to the selection of military or civilian advisers, short tours meant inadequate experience and limited institutional memory, and the emphasis was technical-assistance-oriented to the exclusion of sufficient advisory focus on the deficiencies in individual leadership that proved South Vietnam's greatest weakness.

5. When the U.S. is backing a major local government effort which cuts across normal interagency lines, e.g., counterinsurgency, it should
press that government to create special machinery to manage it, if necessary by using U.S. aid inputs as a lever to this end. Lack of such machinery was long a major handicap to effective GVN performance. Only when it was created in pacification, for example, did the GVN effort really begin to produce results commensurate with the investment.

6. Should the local government prove so weak and ineffective that the U.S. decides on direct intervention -- a contingency which seems unlikely under the Nixon Doctrine -- some form of combined management is probably indispensable to the optimum use of combined resources. Among other things it will facilitate the use of such leverage as the U.S. commitment provides. One can even envisage situations where the U.S. stops short of sending combat forces, but where the U.S. resource input is so large as to justify insistence on a form of combined command (or a Director of Operations on the Malaya model) as the price of U.S. aid. In retrospect, some form of combined command in Vietnam could not have helped but improve RVNAF performance, and have assisted in better selection of Vietnamese commanders. As we have seen, such devices as combined command or injection of U.S. officials into the GVN structure were considered (though rejected) even before the U.S. intervened directly.

7. Last but not least, if flexibly tailored response to the unique nature of each situation is the optimum, then we must bear in mind that it will not necessarily be best to follow in perhaps quite different circumstances what it seems in retrospect would have been the optimum in Vietnam. Indeed, we should consciously guard against what might easily become the new conventional wisdom. This too has numerous implications for our doctrine, training, incentive patterns, and the like.

* * *

If these rather generalized "lessons" and suggestions seem like restatements of the obvious, just recall what actually happened in Vietnam. Looking in hindsight at that painful, even tragic experience
suggests that they have been more honored in the breach than the observance. True, the variety of institutional and other constraints described in this paper are only part of the reasons why. Yet, as this study has served to demonstrate, they must be included among the complex reasons behind our poor performance in the Vietnam war. If our failures in Vietnam help us to recognize this problem area, to clarify our perceptions of the costs of not dealing with it, and to encourage the search for ways of doing so in future, we will at least have a leg up on the solution — and this study will have more than served its purpose.
I. VIETNAM WAS DIFFERENT -- AND WE KNEW IT


2. General Lewis Walt, Strange War, Strange Strategy, Funk & Wagnalls, New York, 1970, p. 7. Or, on p. 32: "It was a new kind of war, with unique ground rules."


6. Leslie H. Gelb, "Vietnam: Some Hypotheses About Why and How," and Daniel Ellsberg, "Escalating in a Quagmire." Both papers, prepared for the 66th Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association (APSA) in September 1970, were distributed at the time, though their texts were not subsequently published. Gelb and Ellsberg write as insiders with past access to official documents transcending their periods of active involvement.


12. Ibid., pp. 984-985. For one example of such perceptive official advice, which foreshadowed many future problems, see the citations from Hillsman and Forrestal's report to the President after a trip to Vietnam in January 1963 (Roger Hillsman, To Move a Nation, Doubleday & Company, Inc., New York, 1967, pp. 463-466).

II. WHY DID WE DO SO POORLY?


2. Ibid., p. 311.


7. Tanham and Duncanson, "Some Dilemmas of Counterinsurgency."


13. Richard J. Barnet attempts to do just that, though primarily with respect to how we got progressively more enmeshed in Vietnam. He argues that "The roots of the Vietnam failure lie more in the structure and organization of the national security bureaucracy" than in the roles of the President and his chief advisers. To him, Vietnam "illustrates the crucial role of bureaucratic momentum." The vast foreign policy bureaucracy really sets the pace and escalates commitments with "a kind of Parkinson inevitability... The dynamism of the myriad bureaucratic empires dealing in national security assures not only the escalation of U.S. commitments but their progressive militarization as well," etc. For his free-swinging hypothesis plus rebuttals by Wohlstetter, Schlesinger, Cooper, and others, see *No More Vietnams?* pp. 50-114.


III. THE FLAWED NATURE OF OUR CHOSEN INSTRUMENT


2. Ibid.


5. Ibid., pp. 455-457, and p. 366.

6. Ibid., p. 460.

7. Ibid., p. 531.


12. Ibid., p. 21.


14. Ibid., IV.B.1, p. i; see also pp. 13-18.

15. Ibid., pp. i and iii.

16. Ibid., IV.B.1, p. v.

17. Ibid., pp. 102-103; see also pp. 115-116.

18. Ibid., p. 131, repeated in NSAM 111 of 11/22/61 (ibid., p. 133).

19. Ibid., pp. 139-146 (quotation from pp. 143-144).

20. Ibid., pp. 146-147.

21. Ibid., p. 135.

22. Ibid., IV.B.5, pp. v, viii, 30-36 (quotation from p. 36).

23. Ibid., IV.B.4, p. 19.

24. Ibid., IV.B.5, pp. v and vi.

25. Ibid., IV.C.9(a), p. i.

26. Ibid., pp. 1-9, 17.

27. Ibid., pp. 7, 17-18.
28. Ibid., pp. 12 and 17.
29. Ibid., pp. 21-23.

31. See Ambassador Taylor's November 27, 1964, appreciation of GVN weaknesses which caused U.S. efforts to assist SVN to have little impact and created "a losing game in SVN" (Pentagon Papers, VI.C.2(c), pp. 42-44).

32. For example, JCS proposals of 10/27/64 cited in Pentagon Papers, IV.C.2(c), pp. 2-3; see also pp. 32-35.
33. Taylor's proposals, ibid., pp. 45-47.
34. Ibid., pp. 54-55.
35. Ibid., p. 68 and IV.C.9(a), p. 54.
36. Ibid., IV.C.2(c), pp. 67-71.
37. Ibid., pp. 71-72 and 75.
38. Ibid., p. 80.
40. Ibid., p. 282.
42. Ibid., IV.C.6(a), p. 3.
44. See especially, Pentagon Papers, IV.B.3, pp. 63-66, 92-99; IV.C.9(a), pp. iii-v and 17-23; and IV.C.9(b), pp. ii-iv, 23-26, 56-58.
45. Ibid., IV.B.4, pp. iii and 23-24.
46. Ibid., IV.B.4, discusses the entire abortive phased-withdrawal exercise.
47. Ibid., IV.C.9(a), pp. 4 and 29.
48. Ibid., IV.C.9(b), p. 7. See also quotation from IV.B.3, p. 64.
49. Ibid., IV.C.9(a), p. 29.
50. Ibid., IV.C.9(b), pp. iii and 7.
51. Ibid., IV.B.3, p. 64; IV.C.9(b), pp. iii [quote], 23, and 60.
52. Ibid., IV.C.9(b), pp. 26-27.
53. Ibid., IV.B.3, pp. 94-99.
54. Ibid., p. 92; IV.C.9(b), p. iii.
55. Ibid., IV.B.3, pp. 65-66; quotation on p. 94.
56. Ibid., IV.C.4, p. 2.
57. Cooper, Lost Crusade, p. 426.
IV. INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS ON U.S. PERFORMANCE


4. Ibid., IV-A.4, pp. 18-19.

5. Ibid., p. 21.

6. Ibid., IV-B.1, p. 63.

7. NSAM 288 cited in Pentagon Papers, IV.B.3, p. 42.

8. Ibid., p. 58.

9. Ibid., p. 108.


15. Pentagon Papers, IV.B.3, p. 5.

16. Ibid., IV.A.4, pp. 2.1-4.1.

20. For perceptive comments on this phenomenon of "mirror-imaging," see Jordan, Foreign Aid and the Defense of Southeast Asia.
21. Pentagon Papers, IV.A.4, p. 4.1; see pp. 24-31 for details on extent of mirror-imaging.
22. In 1960 training and equipping of the Civil Guard became a MAP function, and in 1961 the Self Defense Corps was given military status and received MAP support. They got a very small share, however. See William A. Nighswonger, Rural Pacification in Vietnam, Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., New York, 1966, p. 44.
23. Tuchman, Stilwell, p. 512, citing Stilwell's History of the CBI Theater.
26. Pentagon Papers, IV.A.4, pp. 4.1, 21-23. Also IV.A.5, Tab. 4, p. 27, and IV.B.3, p. 7. See also Jordan, Foreign Aid, pp. 138-139.
28. Ibid., IV.B.3, p. 34.
29. See Tables in ibid., pp. 127-128.
30. Ibid., p. 126.
31. Ibid., IV.B.3, pp. 9-10.
33. See, for example, JCSM 811-65 of 11/10/65, cited in Pentagon Papers, IV.C.6(a), p. 17, or DOD Memorandum on February 1965 Honolulu Conference Decisions in ibid., p. 32.
34. Ibid., pp. 34-35.
35. Ibid., pp. 55-61.
37. Ibid., pp. 16-18.
39. See JCSM 136-64 of 2/18/64, in Pentagon Papers, IV.C.1, pp. 37-39; also JCSM 174-64 of 3/2/64.
40. See, for example, Pentagon Papers, IV.C.2(a), pp. 20-21; IV.C.2(b), pp. ii, 25; IV.C.2(c), pp. 2, 9, 32-35.
42. Ibid., IV.C.7(a) and IV.C.7(b).
43. Ibid., IV.C.7(a), p. 85.
44. Ibid., pp. 138, 140-145.
45. Ibid., pp. 149-155; OSD/SA analyses of air-war effectiveness reached similar conclusions, cited on p. 172.
46. Ibid., pp. 163-167.
47. Ibid., p. 175.
48. Ibid., p. 177.
49. Ibid., pp. 179-180.
50. Ibid., IV.C.7(b), pp. 49-52.
51. Ibid., p. 80.
52. Ibid., pp. 112, 115-131.
53. Ibid., pp. 132-134.
58. Pentagon Papers, IV.C.6(b), p. 82. See also C. W. Corddry's article in The Baltimore Sun, July 1, 1972, p. 5.
60. Thompson, in criticizing allied strategy, sees its flaws as partly a product of American "wealth." "When the solution to a problem failed, no one questioned whether the solution itself was right or wrong. It was assumed that the resources had been inadequate. More of the same from bombing the North to fertilizers, was the constant remedy." No Exit from Vietnam, p. 127.
64. DPM of 11/17/66 cited in Pentagon Papers, IV.C.6(a), pp. 105-119. (The attrition analysis inputs to the DPM were provided by OSD/SA.)
65. Ibid., p. 103.
66. Ibid., IV.C.6(b), p. 28.
V. INSTITUTIONAL OBSTACLES TO THE LEARNING PROCESS

1. No More Vietnams?  p. 211.
2. Vannevar Bush, Pieces of Action, William Morrow, New York, 1970, p. 28. See also Chapters II and III.
6. Pentagon Papers, IV.B.3, p. 29.
10. See the Pentagon Papers, IV.C.6(a) and (b).
12. Ibid., p. 294.
13. Ibid., pp. 299-300.

VI. LACK OF UNIFIED MANAGEMENT

1. Komer, "The Malayan Emergency in Retrospect."
3. Thompson, No Exit from Vietnam, p. 149; and "Squaring the Error," Foreign Affairs, April 1968, p. 452.
5. Thompson, No Exit, p. 146.
7. Pentagon Papers, IV.C.6(a), p. 86.
10. RUSI Seminar Report.
11. Cooper, Lost Crusade, p. 413.
12. Hoopes sees the problem as arising largely from the decline of the NSC machinery under Kennedy and then Johnson, and a parallel decline of longer-range policy planning (Limits of Intervention, pp. 2-6). The author, who served in the NSC machinery under them and also under Eisenhower, feels he overstates the case. The NSC staff was never an operating staff.
13. Pentagon Papers, IV.B.1, p. 23.
15. See ibid., discussion in IV.B.3, pp. 15-21.
16. Ibid., IV.B.1, p. 35.


22. Ibid., IV.B.3, pp. 72-73.


25. Cooper sees President Johnson's personal management style and compulsive secrecy as largely responsible for how Washington ran the war. *Lost Crusade*, pp. 413-417.


32. Hilsman, *To Move a Nation*, p. 442.

33. *Pentagon Papers*, IV.C.8, p. 21; see also McNamara's December 1963 comments to the President on p. 59.

34. For Ambassador Johnson's description of how he and Taylor operated, see ibid., pp. 21-22.


36. *Pentagon Papers*, IV.C.8, pp. 9, 12, 55.

37. Ibid., IV.C.1, p. 109.

38. Ibid., IV.C.8, pp. 8-9.


40. IV.C.8 of the *Pentagon Papers* describes the many problems Washington had during 1966-1967 in forcing this consolidation on a reluctant Lodge and Porter, not to mention the Saigon agencies and their Washington parents.


42. *Pentagon Papers*, IV.A.5, Tab. 4, pp. 60-62.

43. Ibid., IV.B.1, p. 131.

44. Ibid., p. 143.
47. Thompson, *No Exit*, p. 127.
55. Those Britons with Malayan experience find this particularly hard to understand. Sir Claude Finner, Inspector General of Malayan Police, 1963-1966, remarks how during his August 1968 survey trip to Vietnam (at the author's request) "it appeared to me that the war was being conducted by the U.S. and GVN in separate and almost watertight compartments. Coordination of the combined U.S./GVN effort would seem to be achieved by personal liaison on an ad hoc basis at all levels." RUSI Seminar Report, p. 5.
57. Ibid., pp. 468-471, and 492-493.
58. Ibid., pp. 495-504.
60. Ibid., pp. 96 and 130.
61. Ibid., p. 138.
62. Ibid., pp. 139 and 147.
63. Ibid., pp. 140-146.
64. Interview with Sir Robert Thompson, May 27-28, 1970.
66. Ibid., IV.C.1, pp. 78-79.
67. Cable from the President to Ambassador Lodge, dated May 26, 1964, in ibid., pp. 76-78.
68. Ibid., IV.B.3, pp. 44-45.
69. Ibid., IV.C.1, pp. 111-113. General Taylor also notes how he opposed both encadrement and U.S. civil affairs teams, in *Swords and Plowshares*, p. 343.
70. *Pentagon Papers*, IV.B.3, pp. 59-60; see also IV.C.4, p. 20, and IV.C.1, pp. 115-116.
71. Ibid., IV.C.1, pp. 116-118.
VII. ATTEMPTS AT ADAPTIVE RESPONSE

1. For his analysis of his job, see Leonard Sullivan, Jr., "R&D for Vietnam," Science and Technology, October 1968, p. 28.

2. Statement of Major General John R. Deane, Director, Defense Communications Planning Group, to Special Committee of Senate Armed Services Committee, November 13, 1970.

3. Thompson, No Exit, p. 136.


6. Ibid., p. 275.


8. Ibid., IV.A.5, Tab. 2, pp. 22-24.

9. Ibid., IV.C.9(b), p. 5.

10. Ibid., IV.C.5, p. 20.


12. President Johnson raised this twice with the author in 1966-1967, but the author was strongly opposed. He felt as a matter of policy that the laboring oar in pacification should be strictly Vietnamese, and designed the "new model" program on this basis.

13. Pentagon Papers, IV.B.3, p. 73.


15. For two earlier views which stress local security as essential, see Nighswonger, Rural Pacification, and John C. Donnell, "The War, the Gap, and the Cadre," Asian Survey, Winter 1966. Both authors were U.S. civilian officials who served in Vietnam.


19. Their activities are described in C. F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, Time Runs Out in CBI, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., 1959, the relevant volume of the official history. Unfortunately, the work does not include total advisory strengths.

20. Ibid., pp. 15-16.

21. Ibid., see especially Chapter VIII, pp. 231-261, 262-269, and 373-378.

22. Ibid., p. 378.

23. Ibid., pp. 359-360.

VIII. WAS THERE A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY?

1. For a discussion of the "two strategic concepts" considered in Vietnam see Roger Hilsman's chapter on "Two American Counterstrategies to Guerrilla Warfare" in *China in Crisis*, Vol. 2, pp. 276-301.


9. Ibid., IV.A.5, Tab. 4, pp. 43-56.
10. Ibid., pp. 60-62.
15. Ibid., IV.B.1, pp. 23-29.
16. Ibid., pp. 29-30.
20. Ibid., pp. 429-434. See also *Pentagon Papers*, IV.B.2.
22. Ibid., p. 21.
23. For a detailed analysis of the rise and fall of strategic hamlets, see ibid., IV.B.2.
27. Ibid., IV.C.1, pp. 17-21.
28. Ibid., pp. 43-46, describe the plan.
29. Ibid., IV.C.9(a), p. 11.
30. Ibid., pp. 12-13; see also IV.C.1, pp. 44-53.
31. Ibid., IV.C.1, p. 52.
32. Ibid., p. 11.
33. See ibid., IV.C.8, pp. 1-7, for discussion of Hop Tac.
35. Ibid., p. 38.
36. Ibid., pp. 48 and 52.
37. Ibid., p. 50.
38. See ibid., IV.C.5, pp. 51-54, for the sad state of pacification in early 1965. Westmoreland's famous "Estimate of the Situation" of 3/26/65 hardly even mentioned pacification (ibid., pp. 84-88).

39. Ibid., IV.C.8, p. ii. Also interesting is the fact that COMUSMACV's year-end message on 1965 did not even mention pacification (p. v).

40. See IV.C.4, pp. 108ff., for discussion of these.

41. Ibid., p. 59.

42. Ibid., p. 104.

43. Ibid., p. 114.

44. See ibid., IV.C.8, pp. iii-iv and 1-45.

45. Ibid., pp. 55-61.

46. Ibid., IV.C.9(b), p. 24. When the JCS queried him about RD effectiveness, COMUSMACV replied that the program was primarily civilian.

47. Ibid., IV.C.8, pp. 74-79.


49. Ibid., pp. 84-85.

50. Ibid., pp. 88-89.

51. Ibid., IV.C.6(b), pp. 13-18.

52. Ibid., IV.C.6(a), pp. 81-89.

53. Ibid., p. 88.

54. Ibid., p. 93.

55. Ibid., pp. 105-119, especially p. 110.

56. Ibid., pp. 120-122.

57. Ibid., IV.C.6(b), pp. 61-67.

58. See Katzenbach, Komer, Bundy, and Enthoven memoranda cited in ibid., pp. 77-81, 85-89, and 105-110. See also ISA draft DPM of May 19, 1967, in ibid., pp. 146-165.

59. Ibid., p. 215.

60. An OSD/SA paper on "Alternate Strategies" stated flatly that "our strategy of 'attrition' has not worked." Pentagon Papers, IV.C.6(c), p. 28.

61. Ibid., p. 16.

62. See the JCS, CIA, ISA, CJCS, and SA assessments in ibid., pp. 1-76.

63. Ibid., pp. 33-34.

IX. WHAT INSTITUTIONAL LESSONS CAN BE LEARNED?

1. For a cogent symposium discussion of the dangers of misreading the lessons of Vietnam, see No More Vietnams? pp. 1-5.

2. Ibid., pp. 100 and 210.


4. Zorthian, "Where Do We Go From Here?" p. 46.


7. Enthoven and Smith, How Much Is Enough? pp. 290-291. See also their other trenchant comments in ibid., Chapters 8 and 9.