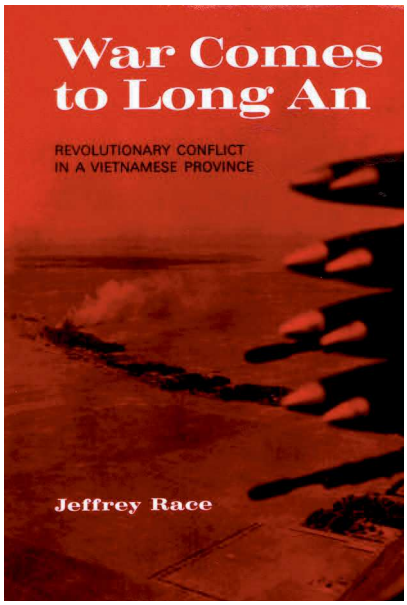
WAR COMES TO LONG AN
BACK STORY TO THE WRITING OF A MILITARY CLASSIC[1]
by Jeffrey Race

Now being reprinted in an updated and expanded edition, *War Comes to Long An* was first published in 1972[2] and was the book I longed to buy in 1965 as the most junior lieutenant in Vietnam–but could nowhere find. Thereby hangs this tale of my adventures then in Vietnam and since elsewhere–a tale with implications for the creative process in academic writing, for the study of institutional change and of the learning disabilities of military institutions, and for priorities in public policy-making in America and elsewhere.

Birthing *War Comes to Long An* changed my life. I had no inkling when I began the project with trepidation in mid-1967 at the age of 24–using my own funds to satisfy my private curiosity–how it would change both my life and the lives of so many others. Perhaps these notes on the creation of that work may inspire others so inclined to dare the same creative act that summoned me, while at the same time illuminating some issues of public policy.



Between the covers of *War Comes to Long An*, I kept myself out. In these pages I beg to convey the private side of that public act, inseparable from the process of creation and from what came next. Some readers may find what follows entertaining or amusing; a few may find it helpful or even stimulating. You are my real target.

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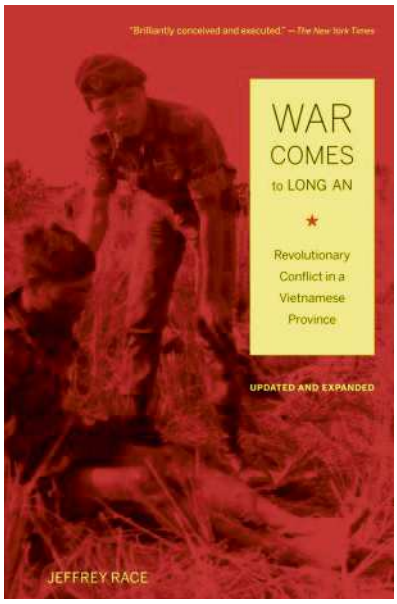
"A lot of people are alive today," confided Dick Childress to me one day in 1984, "who would be dead if you had not written that book." He said he had circulated extracts to colleagues on the White House staff planning *something* (he didn't say what) *somewhere* (I guessed Latin America from headlines at the time). Reading my words led some influential officials to rethink the wisdom of a debated course of action still unknown to me. These pages tell how that happened.

Several questions arose over the years to me and to others about the book's creation and the consequences of its appearance. With partial knowledge now of these consequences, and with the perspective of four decades as their author, I offer my own answers to these questions.



How could I write *War Comes to Long An*?

From time to time I have asked myself why, when the same data were in principle open to many, it was I who wrote this particular book and not anyone else among all the foreigners thrust into the war in one way or another. Several reasons have come to mind.

Foremost was an early and decisively formative experience arising from my own curiosity. Since the age of 15 I had been reading *The New York Times* (one perquisite of a newspaper route) and developed the habit of following the evolution of stories from day to day. Taking Economics 1 during my first year of college I became quite interested in the Great Depression, and reading Shirer's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* in another course raised my interest in this subject as well.

As a first-year college student in 1961 I was well informed about current understanding of these events from the facts and analytical methods developed since the '30s. It occurred to me that I could probably learn much, possibly even gain wisdom, by going back 35 years to read how events whose actual future I knew were understood at the time by those necessarily ignorant of what lay ahead.

And so I spent the warm summer of 1962 in the cool basement of Harvard's Widener Library reading musty hard copies of the *Times*, from 1928 every day through 1939. Many were my conclusions from this transformative experience: the incompleteness of knowledge in the midst of world-changing events, the lack of compelling analytic (much less even of predictive) models to give meaning to sparse facts, the paucity of individuals who made (in retrospect) sound predictions. (One exception was Otto D. Tolischus.)

But the most overwhelming impression was that the judgments at the time of knowledgable and respectable people, even those with integrity and dedication, were untrustworthy. And so this summer of reading had already by the age of 19 ruined me as the potential disciple of any leader, school, fashion or body of authority.

Second is that, after a period of thrashing around in 1967 trying to structure my problem, I framed the research question in a fruitful way: why one side could better motivate followers to expend effort and take risks. As it happens this was exactly the way Count Tolstoy (I recalled later) had posed it in *War and Peace*: "Napoleon commanded an army to be raised, and to march out to war . . . the question [is] why six hundred thousand men go out to fight when Napoleon utters certain words . . . ." Or *not* as in the case of Saigon's leaders by the time I had arrived as a green lieutenant in 1965.

Third, I had the curiosity to search relentlessly for data answering that question. Curiosity is a personal characteristic I luckily had in abundance. Others not so fortunate can train for it.

Fourth, my ease in the Vietnamese language opened paths to all kinds of human and documentary resources either unavailable to others or impractical to use via translation or interpretation. This was again a quirk of character. I first studied the language on my own with a set of instructional tapes during 23 days aboard ship en route to Vietnam, through ignorance learning the northern rather than the southern dialect (fine as it was comparable to learning BBC rather than Brooklyn English). During evenings the first year a friendly Vietnamese lieutenant helped me to study as an alternative to carousing. I finally made very serious progress during my second year of service when I became the last member of the last rural advisory team to be emplaced in Vietnam, posted to an isolated area accessible only by helicopter. With just four other Americans, all my professional activities involved Vietnamese counterparts only, offering extensive opportunity for vocabulary expansion, for practice in speaking and listening, and for cultural immersion.

A vivid example of the resulting access was an important trove of documents released to me after a brief but amicable conversation with

Brigadier General Nguyen Ngoc Loan, later famously captured on film summarily executing a Viet Cong prisoner in the heat of urban guerilla warfare. One reviewer of *War Comes to Long An* was astonished that I should have received such cooperation: "One naturally assumes that the governments of newly-decolonized countries are not going to open their confidential files to political-science researchers from Western uni-


Photograph by Eddie Adams AP

versities, least of all their police files in time of rebellion and civil war. And yet that is the facility which the South Vietnamese authorities . . . extended to Jeffrey Race."[3]

Fifth, I displayed genuine interest in my interviewees' lives, leading to many rich experiences in open-ended talks, because (I am sure) these interviewees felt a real person-to-person relationship however brief. This differed from the questionnaire experiences recounted to me by my students at university level in later years.

Why did the approach of this book diverge from contemporary mainstream analyses?

In Chapter Four, "Lessons from Long An," I repudiate on the evidence other answers to the question then nagging the American public: "Why do we have so little to show for our effort?"

Why did I or could I do that?

Partly of course because simple curiosity drove me beyond baseless explanations. But I could do this because as a novice I had no ego-involvement in existing policies or programs. Not only was I not an "expert," I was innocent of knowledge. But I was secure in my identity, at peace with myself so trying to gratify no supervisor, and sufficiently confident in my skills to dare view the problem in a new way. And I needed to please no paymaster. (My only hope of external support, a U.S. State Department grant, was cancelled immediately upon my return to Vietnam to carry out my research.)

How did my life change?

Little of my original life plan (quietly teaching political science somewhere in New England) survived publication of *War Comes to Long An*. Instead I have spent my entire adult life outside my native country, encountering unimagined ups and downs.

In mid-1968, after leaving active military service and one year into my research program, word seeped out of my initial findings, bringing the first slippage of my career off its planned track. A then stranger, Jerrold K. Milsted, program manager in the Bangkok office of the Advanced Research Projects Agency of the U.S. Department of Defense, phoned one day suggesting to meet at the Rex Hotel in downtown Saigon. Over lunch he invited me to visit Thailand where ARPA was supporting a research program on the Thai anti-government movement. I agreed to visit when I could make travel arrangements; he replied "I have a plane at the airport. Let's go after lunch." Since I kept a suitcase packed for emergencies, we left that afternoon.

Impressed by the opportunity to broaden my knowledge and the possibility of some free time to write up the results of my then-completed Vietnam field work, I moved to Bangkok for a

year before returning to graduate study. The research I started there was the first step toward my life-long professional involvement with Thailand.

Later the value of *War Comes to Long An* aided my application for an unusual fellowship from the Institute of Current World Affairs (the Crane-Rogers Foundation, now of Washington DC, then of New York). While the financial stipend was modest, programmatic freedom and a generous travel allowance permitted me to move into the study of relationships between political, economic and technological change using the varied histories of Southeast Asian countries as my test lab. Between ICWA and a subsequent invitation to become a Research Fellow at the Research School of Pacific Studies of the Australian National University, I was able to expand my work to Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia.

From my Vietnam research and through a speaking tour organized by the United States Information Service, I also became known to a group of Young Turks in the Philippine military and to ranking figures in the Manila government as well.

During this time I retained my commission in the army and although on paper still a signal officer (my lifelong alternate profession being electronics), my military advisory background and experience in strategic analysis had led to a series of unusual assignments during my annual reserve training. As I grew better known I came to be requested by name to serve on high-level Army and Defense Department staffs in Washington, in fact being flown back for two weeks annually as an exception to budget guidelines despite my junior rank.

In 1984 I was living in Thailand, self-employed advising multi-national firms with operations in Southeast Asia, particularly on the Philippines where both communist-led and Islamic insurgencies were combining with the corrupt misrule of President Ferdinand Marcos and his family and friends to tear the country apart. As important interests were at risk a debate raged in Washington between those attached to Marcos and those who felt he must go, recapitulating the 1963 debate over what to do about Diem in Vietnam–and often citing it.

That September I received military reserve orders to fly to Washington to join a multi-agency team tasked to devise a plan to handle President Marcos and to avert the collapse many saw coming. Working intensely together we composed what a few months later President Ronald Reagan signed as National Security Decision Directive 163, "U.S. Policy towards the Philippines." Our team had considered the raging policy debate and decided to word our draft in a clever way to gain agreement from both sides (roughly, to sink with Marcos, or to risk a leadership change) but which given our knowledge of his character would work in only one way were our draft to be adopted as policy. (I called the approach a mouse trap: something alluring but actually fatal.) The entire document was quite comprehensive, so we divided up our tasks; my principal responsibility was devising the trap.

As expected the Philippine political and security situations continued to deteriorate. Midway through 1985 an old Vietnam hand then posted to our embassy in Bangkok phoned me at home there asking me to fly to Manila to receive a briefing from Ambassador Stephen Bosworth and then to spend a month diagnosing the risks in our current policy and forecasting what lay ahead. I asked why I had been selected when so many skilled official analysts were at hand. His reply: "You are known for not telling the boss what he wants to hear."

A month's close study in the Philippines showed there was no risk at all in continuing to support Marcos: catastrophe was guaranteed. I submitted my report to Ambassador Bosworth who a short time later was summoned to Washington for an unusual private meeting with President Reagan in which my work modestly figured.

By February of 1986 the NSDD plan was clearly unfolding, so I used accumulated frequent-flyer miles to join two consulting colleagues in Manila to view the show. I felt that I could not miss the great drama the scripting of which I had been privileged to witness in late 1984. (On my last duty day with the multi-agency team my supervisor had called me in to say of the mouse trap "If this plan works it will be wonderful, but if it fails I cannot tell the President that a reserve major drafted this." I judged I just had to go to see it myself.)

I had been present at three previous turning points in Asian politics: the 1968 Tet attacks in Vietnam (on the very night of which I had in fact begun typing the first chapter of *War Comes to Long An*), the 1973 collapse of the military dictatorship in Thailand, and the 1976 coup d'etat which overthrew Thailand's elected government. (One academic fleeing the coup stayed at my home near the airport while escaping the country.) Now I was favored to view yet another from a distance of but a few feet: the moment on February 23, 1986, on Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA) when Philippine Marine armored personnel carriers momentarily halted before a dozen Catholic nuns lying across the roadway (in the very front of a crowd of tens of thousands who had come into the streets). After a brief stand-off and shouted threats and warnings, the lead vehicle roared its engine, leapt forward to crush the nuns—and stopped.[4] In the instant a moment later when Butz Aquino, brother of the assassinated Senator Benigno Aquino, leapt atop the vehicle, it became apparent that President Marcos was finished. Which was of course the plan.

As the drama ended we were pleased and relieved at Marcos' departure, perhaps like a doctor upon a successful live birth. The Manila airport had long been closed, but it reopened quickly after Marcos left for Hawaii two days later. I took the first plane out.

To whom did *War Comes to Long An* appeal and why?

My attempt to keep myself out of my research results, and to let the facts and the actors speak for themselves, succeeded beyond expectation.

Several reviewers commented on this authorial voice, unusual at the time since American intervention in Vietnam was such a polarizing issue and I myself had been an active participant on the side of the Saigon authorities. For example *The Economist*: "A remarkably compassionate and honest book"[5]; or the *Marine Corps Gazette*: "Mr. Race does not appear to espouse views either for or against the American effort in Southeast Asia and is only concerned with presenting the facts from both sides along with detailed analyses of key events and time periods."[6]

Three constituencies took up the book for their own purposes.

First of course were scholars of modern Vietnam for whom it became an important resource since based almost entirely on primary documents in the Vietnamese language. I had, for example, uncovered an important error in recent historiography in connection with the 1960 Trang Sup attack in Tay Ninh province, which was connected to the larger and very hot political issue in both Vietnam and the United States of whether the outbreak of violence in the South at that time

was "simply a subversive campaign directed from Hanoi."[7]

Second (and much later as explained below) were practitioners in the field of what is variously styled counterinsurgency, stability operations or low-intensity conflict, who found a treasure house of concepts, analytical methods and insights into areas crucial to their enterprise. (I had specifically noted in my 1972 introduction that I had no purpose to suggest such.)

Third and somewhat to my surprise leaders in the anti-war (later the anti-imperialist) movement such as Noam Chomsky drew on my work in talks, articles and books, and still do to this day.[8]

Who were listening in the United States Government and what did they hear?

A lively academic literature informs us of factors affecting innovation, of both ideas and tangibles, including ego investments, sunk costs, cognitive dissonance and perceived value to the task at hand. The history of *War Comes to Long An* in the policy and program arena could make a delightful case study in this regard.

My earliest published research appeared in a 1970 issue of the scholarly journal *Asian Survey* under the title "How They Won."[9] Provocative as the title appeared (in fact defeat would not be officially conceded for five more years), its most unwelcome aspect to policy-makers and the reason for the ensuing furore was that (in the midst of an emotional political debate in the U.S.) the case was carefully documented and dispassionately presented by a former U.S. military advisor.

Some gentlemanly hate mail came my way from American military officers and I silently smiled at deprecation from highly placed civilians. One example[10]: Brigadier General James A. Herbert, who while still a colonel and senior American advisor in Long An had frequently helped my research, told me during lunch one day during 1971 that he had recently met Robert Komer (previously head of the American pacification program in Vietnam) in a nearby Pentagon hallway. He related that Komer, knowing Herbert had served in Long An province, said he had just read an *Asian Survey* article by one Jeff Race and wanted to know whether Race had ever visited Long An province. Herbert and I had a good laugh about this, but the serious point is that Komer, "with the personal rank of ambassador" as he was always described, and daily reading detailed intelligence reports from the field, apparently could not conceive how anyone who had ever visited Long An province could commit to paper the analysis I had published in "How They Won."

A short time later Dr. Chester Cooper, Director of the Institute for Defense Analyses, telephoned me from Washington inviting me to join a seminar on "lessons learned in pacification" which he was organizing. The Defense Department was paying a substantial sum, he said, to "search for major lessons of pacification in Vietnam that may have applicability in some other area at some future time." I told him that the Defense Department could learn no useful lessons and to the extent his consulting firm could learn them, its findings would be ignored.

Cooper conceded that the Defense Department had earlier experienced learning difficulties but was optimistic now and urged my attendance. I agreed provided he would circulate in advance to the other seminar participants the fourth chapter of my book (then in final draft) and another paper I had written detailing what might be done about impediments to institutional learning that cognitive dissonance theory predicts.[11] Cooper agreed.

On my arrival in Washington I was advised that Cooper and his three-star Marine colleague had decided not to circulate the documents as promised. I stayed anyway, envisioning a chance to conduct an experiment on live subjects.

The first day's discussion was conducted within what one could call the "conventional wisdom" of American policy and practice up to that time. At several points during the day I introduced evidence from my research indicating that each program under discussion must be evaluated differently if events in Vietnam were viewed as part of a process of social revolution rather than as banditry or external invasion. None of my suggestions was pursued by other participants; the usual response was to continue as if I had not spoken.

On the second day we discussed corruption and what American advisors could do about it, for example threaten a low "pacification rating" if their Vietnamese counterparts continued corrupt practices. I suggested viewing corruption in socio-political terms: that corruption results from a certain distribution of political power, and if corruption concerned Americans, then they must concern themselves with political change. In short, the distributive issues of political justice could not be avoided, and the fact that the Saigon government corruptly perpetuated an oppressive social order was not some lamentable handicap but the heart of the problem.

Finally I suggested that the most important lesson of "pacification" in Vietnam was to learn to recognize an impossible (technically, "overdetermined") situation. If, as some seminar participants had privately told me, certain important variables could not be manipulated by the United States, and yet manipulating those variables was essential to averting catastrophe, then intervention made no sense and honesty compelled us to tell that to the Department of Defense in order to save lives in the future interventions which the Department was then contemplating.

Cooper delivered an immediate and heated response to these proposals to consider new perspectives and new scientific variables in evaluating existing programs: (1) IDA's charter did not permit consideration of the "lessons" I had urged considering–despite the explicit request in his letter of invitation to raise important relevant points; (2) their sole concern was with more effective implementation of existing programs, even though these were part of an ill-conceived strategy and a disastrous policy; (3) he would not permit the meeting to be diverted by "theoretical" considerations; programs were only to be evaluated "pragmatically."

At this point his colleague rose to say that he could summarize in two pages all the errors of American strategy and policy in Vietnam, but the Defense Department would not pay to be told such a thing, so he and Cooper could not permit such subjects to be discussed. While the two of them may have been just as uncomfortable with this reality as was I, it was still a thrilling example of crimestop.[12] I silently rose from my seat, left the room, flew back to Boston, and added a piquant addendum to an *Armed Forces and Society* article I had written describing this very phenomenon.[13]

The next phase came when such individuals as Cooper and his three-star colleague began to retire, die or gain promotion from the brilliance of their accomplishments: the younger generation of my peers in the military saw an opening to introduce subversive notions into military instructional curricula, with interesting results.

One example was the 1973 innovation of Major (now retired Colonel) Jean-André Sauvageot,

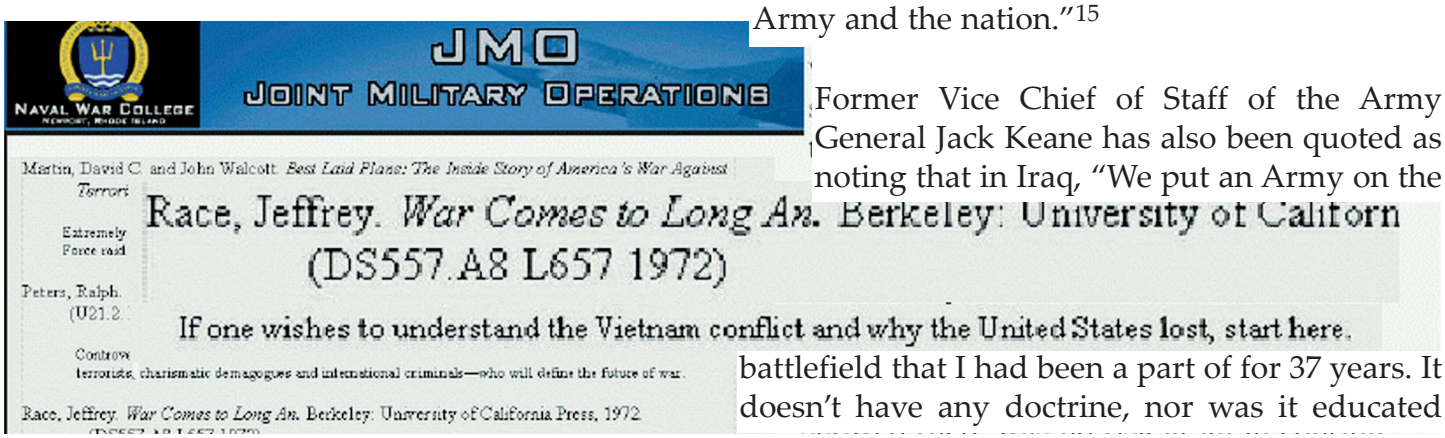
legendary for his field experience and profound language fluency. Sauvageot returned in March of that year from interpreter duty with the Four Party Joint Military Commission to become an instructor at the Army Command and General Staff College, the mandatory schooling program for all officers ranked major or above. He succeeded in gaining the commandant's permission to introduce *War Comes to Long An* to the school's core curriculum, where it remained until around the time of the withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam. Then in 1977 now retired Special Forces Colonel John D. Waghelstein re-introduced *War Comes to Long An* to the school's Low Intensity Conflict curriculum, with amusing consequences as he later wrote in an article about U.S. involvement in Iraq.

> In 1977 LIC instruction at CGSC consisted of forty hours out of the 1,000-hour curriculum, reflecting the Army's interest level. We were an entertaining bunch, not a serious threat to Don Starry's Air-Land Battle crowd and we were pretty much left alone. We used Jeffrey Race's little book *War Comes to Long An* and looked at the "Third World" as the playground of the future. We analyzed insurgent models, spoke "Mao" and *foco* and kept the flame alive. The LIC team had the area experts, so we had some credibility in assessing the arenas of the future. General Bob Arter was the Commandant and he enjoyed our lectures and let us dabble with our little piece of the curriculum. When General William Richardson arrived in 1979, the LIC portion was cut to nine hours, the Air-Land battle mafia took complete control and our Vietnam experience and [counterinsurgency] became non-subjects.[14]

In fact, I myself was invited to lecture Staff College students in 1977 and again in 1978 but only once thereafter (in 1991) as interest waned when it became known that "nothing important to the U.S. Army ever happened in Vietnam," which came to be viewed as a never-to-recur anomaly.

Except recurrence has been so frequent with such grievous consequences that many conclude these are not accidents but systemic failures of decision-making. Ironically, *War Comes to Long An* now appears in the curricula of all the U.S. senior service schools, as part of the official canonical explanation of how America lost the Vietnam War.

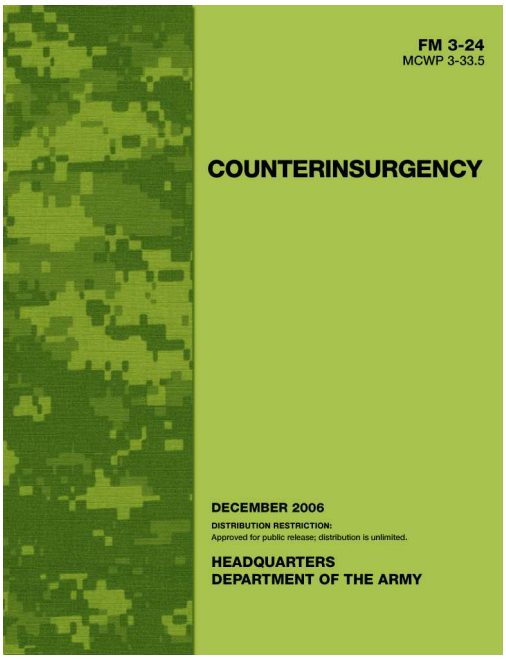
Chief of Staff of the Army General Peter Schoomaker has been quoted as writing that in Vietnam, "The U.S. Army, predisposed to fight a conventional enemy that fought using conventional tactics, overpowered innovative ideas from within the Army and from outside it. As a result, the U.S. Army was not as effective at learning as it should have been, and its failures in Vietnam had grave implications for both the Army and the nation."[15]



Former Vice Chief of Staff of the Army General Jack Keane has also been quoted as noting that in Iraq, "We put an Army on the battlefield that I had been a part of for 37 years. It doesn't have any doctrine, nor was it educated

and trained, to deal with an insurgency . . . . After the Vietnam War, we purged ourselves of everything that had to do with irregular warfare or insurgency, because it had to do with how we lost that war. In hindsight, that was a bad decision."[16]

Such high-level regrets, coincident with the demands of involvement in the Middle East, have recently come together to inspire the U.S. military to develop a body of doctrine drawing on the lessons of experience. Examples include the Army's 2006 Field Manual 3-24[17] and the Human Terrain analysis system developed by the Training and Doctrine Command.[18] And the entire text of Chapter Four of *War Comes to Long An* is now (2008-2009) assigned as the core reading setting the scenario for a week-long classroom exercise at the Command and Staff College of the Marine Corps University.



Such doctrinal innovations may thus now be starting to address the question I raised at the 1971 IDA seminar.

But in forming national policy or strategy, a three-decade lag between knowledge acquisition and knowledge application is worthy of note, even of concern.

While some may fear more and better American military interventions arising from these doctrinal innovations, I am instead reassured. Better insight by military leaders into the internal workings of foreign societies might lead equally to better decisions to exit an intervention, not to intervene, or to intervene in ways more in keeping with America's historic values. In my experience no one is more cautious of risking lives than he who has personally experienced weapons fired in anger.

To what larger issues does *War Comes to Long An* point?

It is well known that most human behavior is determined by irrational, pre-rational or emotional factors. As much as this is cause for concern in quotidian affairs, ample reason exists to believe it applies equally to the formation of policy and of strategy, even though these should be the domain exclusively of stated objectives and serene application of logic to facts. In the Vietnam context for example Leslie Gelb, Richard Betts and Daniel Ellsberg have written extensively (from differing points of view) on distortion in Vietnam policy-making for personal political benefit.[19] H. R. McMaster produced a startling study on the distortions institutional factors imposed on top-level decision-making.[20] I have written on one kind of psychological factor involved.

My personally living this history has convinced me that an issue of paramount importance before my country is how to mitigate such grave distortions in public decision-making–and not just in foreign policy or military strategy. As this is written in late 2009, we see in the United States the impact on the world economy of exceptionally maladroit public decision-making, even though the ill consequences now occurring were completely foreseeable and indeed foreseen and the object of strident warnings for years. Self-interest played some part in this sad train of events but is hardly the sole explanation. Delusional processes clearly were at work then–and are still at work now–among highly educated and seemingly rational public officials.

I conclude with the subject closest to my heart

after this difficult experience: the personal responsibility of individuals. Though historians, political scientists or sociologists may talk of "trends" or "historical forces," in fact such intellectual constructs work only through the decisions of human beings one at a time. "Distortions in policy formation" work in no other way than though individuals with names, just like those across the table from me in the sordid IDA incident described above.

My solution is that as individuals, parents, group leaders and officials we adopt high standards of honesty and dependability, propagate them to those in our care, punctiliously observe them ourselves and ensure that those under our supervision do likewise. Observing rules of prudence would not lift us to paradise but it assuredly would mitigate the severity of the injuries we inflict upon ourselves. Beyond correcting specific errors of analyis such as those discussed above, an urgent national task is thus systematically to address distortions in decision-making as a generic problem of our national life.

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1 U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Historical Bibliography No. 8, "Military Classics," <http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/resources/csi/berlin/berlin.asp>, accessed February 1, 2009.

2 Jeffrey Race, *War Comes to Long An (*Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).

3 "The Rising of the National Liberation Front," *Times Literary Supplement,* March 17, 1972, page 293.

4 Permit me to offer a humorous aside. I lived three years in a combat zone, was in Saigon during the 1968 Tet attacks which brought violent fighting to my doorstep and was right up close during three turbulent government collapses in Bangkok and one in Manila. But the only incident of personal violence in my life so far occurred when drunken townies jumped me in Harvard Square in 1964.

5 *The Economist*, March 11, 1972, page 65.

6 *Marine Corps Gazette,* May 1972.

7 See *War Comes to Long An,* Chapter Four, footnote 5 for details of this issue.

8 ". . . *War Comes to Long An* . . . to date, the best account of the origins of the insurgency under the U.S.-Diem regime" at footnote 15, page 422 of Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, *The Political Economy of Human Rights* (Cambridge, Mass.: South End Press, 1979).

9 Jeffrey Race, "How the Won," *Asian Survey* X:8, August 1970, pp. 628-650.

10 Discussed in more detail in Jeffrey Race, "The Unlearned Lessons of Vietnam," *Yale Review* 66:2, December 1976, pp. 161-177.

11 Jeffrey Race, "Vietnam Intervention: Systematic Distortion in Policy-making," *Armed Forces and Society*, 2:3, May 1976. But note that the published text was marred and its sense distorted in this journal by several typographical and formatting errors. See footnote 13 for a corrected text also amplified by an epilogue testing the article's hypotheses.

12 Crimestop: "the faculty of stopping short . . . at the threshold of any dangerous thought. It includes the power of not grasping analogies, of failing to perceive logical errors, of misunderstanding the simplest arguments . . . and of being bored and repelled by any train of thought which is capable of leading in a heretical direction. Crimestop, in short, means protective stupidity." George Orwell (pseud.), *1984* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1949), Chapter 9; downloadable at <http://www.mega.nu:8080/ampp/1984.html>.

13 Revised version online at <https://www.jeffreyrace.com/document/dstrtpol.pdf>

14 John D. Waghelstein, "What's Wrong in Iraq? or Ruminations of a Pachyderm," *Military Review*, 86:1, January/February 2006, pp. 112-117.

15 As quoted in John Nagl, "The Evolution and Importance of Army/Marine Corps Field Manual 3-24, Counterinsurgency" Introduction to Department of the Army Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

16 *Ibid.*

17 Department of the Army Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

18 <http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/>

19 Leslie Gelb and Richard Betts, *The Irony of Vietnam* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1979); Daniel Ellsberg, "The Quagmire Myth and the Stalemate Machine," *Public Policy*, 19, no. 2 (1971), pp. 217-74.

20 H. R. McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997).

BAKSTORY.QXD 01-03-2010--> BAKSTORY.PDF 01-03-2010 -> BAKSTORY.RTF 01-03-2010 (some formatting mutilation) 03--08-2025 update footnote 13 link